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16-PAGE SPECIAL

Inspectors sacked for breaking rules

Tighter rules promised for meat hygiene

By Philip Webster and Polly Newton

THE Government promised tougher action against rogue abattoirs and meat inspectors last night amid allegations that ministers had been warned several times about a "potential timebomb" of declining hygiene standards.

Forty-five Meat Hygiene Service (MHS) employees have been disciplined, with three being dismissed, for failing to follow rules aimed at minimising the risk of "mad cow" disease.

And Angela Browning, the Food Minister, intends to publish "league tables" of hygiene standards in the country's 450 abattoirs. She also said that she would back prosecution of slaughterhouse owners who intimidated inspectors — there had been cases, she said, where police help had been needed so that inspectors could do their job.

The promises of action came after Labour leaked a series of letters from Peter Comrie, general secretary of the Association of Meat Inspectors, to Mrs Browning and to the MHS complaining about abattoir practices. One, written in January and referring to discussions last July, told the hygiene service that standards were steadily decreasing, adding: "This is a potential timebomb."

Then last month Mr Comrie wrote to Mrs Browning saying: "Our levels of enforcement in hygiene at present leave much to be desired. We repeat our concern, particularly, with the faecal contamination of carcasses and offal, and would urge you to take immediate action to alleviate this."

In another letter to the MHS last week, he claimed that inspectors were being actively encouraged by the hygiene service to ignore breaches of regulations, and were in some cases threatened if they tried to take action.

Mrs Browning said last night that she assumed Mr Comrie meant that the inspectors were threatened by abattoir owners, but he said he was referring to the hygiene service.

The disclosure of the letters came in the wake of last week's furore about an unpublished report linking slaughterhouse conditions to the spread of the *E. coli* bacterium. The Government said then that ministers had not seen the report, although most of the concerns raised in it had been addressed.

But in the Commons yesterday, Tony Blair said: "Contrary to what we were told last week, serious concern about contamination was being expressed to ministers as well as others over a period of nine months, and, secondly, the situation in abattoirs on contamination is getting worse not better."

He urged the Prime Minister to institute immediate inquiries into the "serious allegations".

John Major promised to investigate evidence that the AMI had issued several warnings about contaminated meat. He expressed surprise, however, at the AMI's warning that enforcement levels left much to be desired "because it is the AMI themselves who are responsible for the enforcement of hygiene rules".

He also suggested that the vice-president of the AMI, Mac Johnston, had stated his total backing of the hygiene service and its efforts to raise standards.

Mr Johnston told *The Times* that he had no evidence to support Mr Comrie's allegations. "His letters are written on AMI headed notepaper, but as far as I know, they are his views, not those of the committee. There are many people in many professions that, when life moves on, they kick and scream and refuse to move on, and find any opportunity to whine and whinge."

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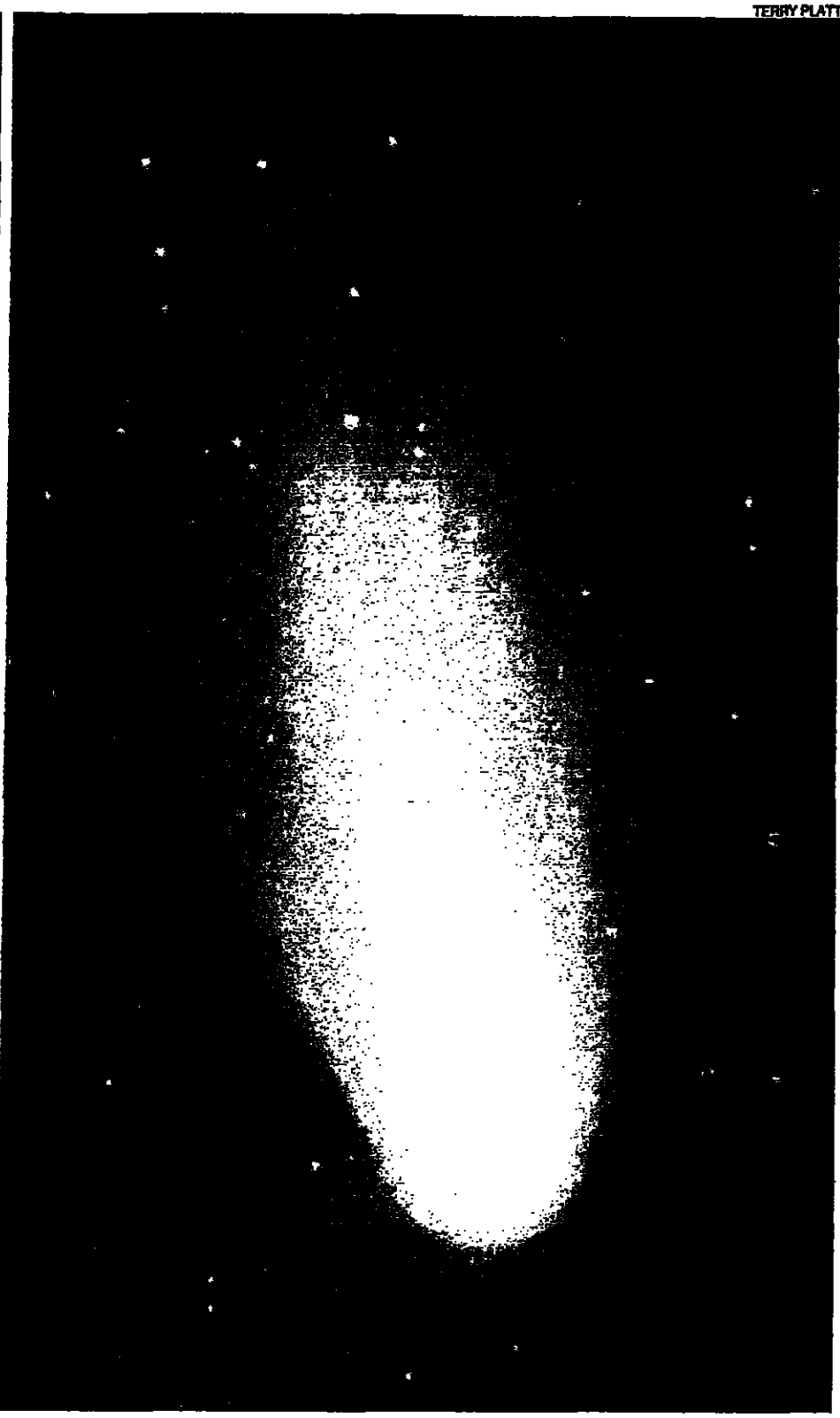
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A photograph of Comet Hale-Bopp taken yesterday at Binfield, Berkshire

Tail of the century

By Nigel Hawkes, Science Editor

COMET Hale-Bopp is providing a brilliant show as one of the best comets of the twentieth century, clearly visible round the world in the morning and evening skies.

Terry Platt, an amateur astronomer from Binfield near Bracknell in Berkshire, took this photograph of the comet at 4am yesterday from his garden. He says that it is easily visible with the naked eye, and comparable in brightness with the brightest stars.

He used a telephoto lens, picking his moment between wisps of early-morning fog. Amateur astronomers are a hardy bunch: he had been up at 4am observing Mars, then managed to get three hours' sleep before rising again to photograph Hale-Bopp.

It is not necessary to head for the hills to observe the comet. One American astronomer, Paul Feldman, of Johns Hopkins University, assures would-be watchers that he had no difficulty seeing the comet from a well-lit supermarket car park, even after sunrise.

the Sun. Hale-Bopp is already brighter than Comet Hyakutake, which crossed the sky a year ago, according to the magazine *Sky & Telescope*. This comet's tail takes up 20 degrees of the sky, about twice the size of a human fist held at arm's length and viewed against the heavens.

Nasa, the space agency, is using Hale-Bopp's passage to put to the test a theory about the origins of the Earth's oceans. It will be launching sounding rockets that will rise above the atmosphere to measure the composition of cloud around the comet. The theory is that water on the Earth came from comets that hit the Earth's surface fairly early in its history. Comets consist largely of ice.

The rocket observations of the amounts of trace elements in the comet will be compared with the amounts of the same elements in the oceans. If they are the same, it will provide support for the theory.

Where to watch, page 5

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"Of course you'd never see something like this under a Labour government"

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Carey supports Palestinian state in sermon from Jerusalem pulpit

From Christopher Walker in Jerusalem

THE Archbishop of Canterbury, Dr George Carey, last night attacked the right-wing Israeli Government's plans to build a new Jewish settlement in occupied Arab east Jerusalem and backed the idea of a Palestinian state.

In a diplomatically sensitive sermon delivered in St George's Cathedral, situated in the Israeli-occupied part of Jerusalem, the spiritual leader of the world's 70 million Anglicans echoed the Pope's condemnation last Sunday of Israeli plans to build homes for 32,000 Jews at Har Homa.

Dr Carey's outspoken support for a Palestinian state precedes his meeting in Gaza on Friday with Yasser Arafat, President of the Palestinian Authority, and comes as the peace process is in its worst crisis since the accord was signed in 1993.

In reference to Har Homa, where Binyamin Netanyahu, the Prime Minister, has said that bulldozers will begin work next week, Dr Carey said: "We look on with anguish as new actions on either side appear to undermine the peace process. The current crisis with regard to new settlements in east Jerusalem is just one of these."

The Archbishop, who is chairing a week-long meeting of world heads of the Anglican Church, added: "Last November, leaders of the British churches appealed for an end to the building and expansion of settlements, and a negotiated agreement on the future of existing settlements. Actions and words must agree."

While the Israeli Govern-

ment claims sovereignty over both sides of Jerusalem, including the Arab sector it occupied and later annexed, and denies Palestinian claims for joint sovereignty in the future, Dr Carey endorsed the description of Jerusalem given by Michael Sabbah, the Latin Patriarch, as "a city for two peoples and three faiths".

He went on to quote from a poem by a young Palestinian, whose last verse runs: "Do you know what it is like to have the vision, that one day we will win



Dr Carey: will meet Arafat

back our land? Until then we can just keep on praying, and keep on saying you will understand."

Dr Carey said: "It is a poem of great sadness direct from the heart. Entitled *The Wandering Palestinian*, it is a young man's dream of a homeland in which he and his

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Jumbo jet survivor begs for refuge

By Richard Ford, Home Correspondent

AN ASYLUM seeker who survived a ten-hour ordeal stowed away in the wheel bay of a jumbo jet which killed his younger brother is to appeal later this week against the Government's refusal to grant him refuge.

Pardeep Saini survived the journey from Delhi despite freezing temperatures as low as -60C and a lack of oxygen. His younger brother, Vijay, 18, died of hypothermia before his body plunged 2,000ft as the Boeing 747's undercarriage was lowered for landing at Heathrow.

Mr Saini, 22, managed to cling on as the aircraft sped along the runway and tumbled towards its bay last October. He was discovered staggering across the tarmac towards the terminal.

Doctors believe he might have lived because of the extreme cold, which would have put his body into a form of suspended animation, help-

ing to prevent damage to vital organs.

The two men were promised that there was a passage from the wheel bay into the baggage hold, but they were misled. Mr Saini said: "Once inside the undercarriage Vijay began to look for the opening into the baggage hold ... we both began to shout and cry ... then the wheels came up and crushed us right in the corners. They were glowing hot and burned me through my clothes."

"I don't know when I became unconscious and I cannot recall anything that happened to Vijay."

Mr Saini claims he was fleeing from persecution in India after being wrongly targeted as a Sikh separatist. He is being cared for by his uncle, Tarsem Singh, in west London.

A Home Office spokeswoman refused to comment on the case.

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Evergreen spectacle of contest between fear and loathing

Before the last election, Labour's Gerald Kaufman said it was a contest "between fear and loathing": the voters' fear of Labour, and loathing of the Tories. Yesterday in Parliament an MP from each side proved Mr Kaufman's insight evergreen. A Tory asked the Prime Minister a question calculated to please an industry by part of which he is paid. The spectacle was loathsome. And a Labour MP read his point of order from an electronic paging device. The chilling sight struck fear into our minds.

To be selected to question the PM

is a lucky chance and comes rarely. So we did wonder quite why John Greenway (Ryedale) chose his prime-time slot during one of the last PM's Questions in this Parliament to make a stilled enquiry about Mr Major's attitude to the Insurance Institute Centenary Year. Yawns vied with raised eyebrows as Greenway droned about the importance of the insurance industry. Major can do without this sort of thing. Wearily he agreed that insurance was a good thing.

And there — with the unanswered questions "Why insurance?"



MATTHEW PARRIS
POLITICAL SKETCH



Why Greenway? Why now? tucked to the back of our minds — we left it.

Or so we thought. But after the Prime Minister had gone, at Points of Order ten minutes later, Brian Wilson (Cunningham N), a Labour campaign manager, asked Madam Speaker whether it was in order for an MP retained by the insurance industry to ask a ques-

tion helpful to the industry, without declaring his interest.

It is in order, as Miss Boothroyd reminded Wilson. MPs do not declare interests before questions, only before speeches. Their interests are declared in the register, where Mr Greenway's are properly listed — as he was quick to point out. Director of a broking firm and member of the Insurance Brokers'

Registration Council, he is parliamentary adviser to the Institute of Insurance Brokers, for which he gets "£10,001 — £15,000". Nor had Greenway any financial interest in the centenary — as he pointed out.

But what a crass, insensitive thing to do. Has all the public fuss and alarm over Members' interests simply passed in one of this MP's large ears and out the other? Do they notice anything, these people? Smarter MPs than Mr Greenway — who are corrupt, and he is not — presumably team up with an MP retained by a different interest, each asking the other's question.

This is the kind of Tory that could eat pork in the street in Algiers during Ramadan, and profess himself surprised that anyone took exception that he was not a Muslim.

One sometimes wonders whether a section of the Tory party pops up occasionally into the chamber from burrows where it lives beneath the Palace of Westminster, with connecting tunnels emerging into champagne-and-canapé receptions for the faithful in their constituencies; and, travelling between the two, never emerge into the light of what the rest of us are

pleased to call Britain. Loathing for the Tories filled my heart. Then I spotted the redoubtable Mr Wilson peering, as he spoke, at a small black pager cradled in his hand, over the ancient dispatch box.

Someone outside was messaging him with the facts. Could it be the communications supremo — Peter Mandelson, in some bunker in the Walworth Road? Fear of these android phobes, liquid nitrogen coursing through their veins, filled my mind. My mind wrestled with my heart. Fear versus loathing. Kaufman was right.

Euro Court ruling cancels rights of contract workers

By CHRISTINE BUCKLEY, INDUSTRIAL CORRESPONDENT

CONTRACT workers in hospitals, councils and other services could lose all employment rights under a European Court ruling.

Passing judgment in the case of a German cleaning lady, judges in Luxembourg said the transfer of a contract from one company to another did not necessarily oblige the new employer to take on its predecessor's guarantees.

Until now, legislation under Europe's Acquired Rights Directive has been assumed to mean that a company taking over a service contract was obliged to take on all service staff and maintain the inherited terms of pay and conditions.

In Britain, the outcome has potentially far-reaching consequences for hundreds of thousands of people in cleaning, catering, ground maintenance, information technology, vehicle maintenance, legal services, housing maintenance and other sectors where contracting arrangements have become the norm.

The verdict brought immediate calls for changes in European law to reinstate protection for the contract-services sector. There are about 250 contract companies working for local authorities, another 150 attached to the National Health Service and 60 more on the payroll of central government departments.

The Public Contractors' Association called for talks with the Department of Trade and Industry, as well as Padraig Flynn, the EU Commissioner

responsible for social policy, and Britain's two Commissioners, Neil Kinnock and Sir Leon Brittan.

Cliff Davis-Coleman, a spokesman for the association, said: "This judgment states that companies that have taken on liabilities cannot pass them on when the contract comes to term, unless the transfer of a contract from one undertaking to another is accompanied by significant tangible or intangible assets or the taking over by a new employer of a major part of the workforce."

The Luxembourg ruling stems from a court case in Germany launched by Ayse Suzen, who lost her job as a cleaning lady when her employer lost its contract with the school where she worked. Frau Suzen challenged the decision by the new contractor not to re-employ the cleaning workers who had been dismissed by their original employer.

The ruling, which said that Frau Suzen could not keep her employment rights after a contract for the business had gone to a new employer who kept her on, flew against previous safeguards for workers under the Acquired Rights Directive.

Rodney Bickerstaffe, head of Unison, Britain's biggest union, which has a large membership in the service sector, said rights under European law should remain intact. "Each case of transfer of undertakings will still have to be considered on its facts,"

The ruling backs the British Government's original objection to the directive. It had argued that the law should not apply to contract companies.

Until now, workers in sectors where employers may change, although the job remains the same — such as contracted out services in the National Health Service, schools and local authorities — have been protected because European law has insisted that the new employers take on the obligations of the previous bosses.

The decision by the Luxembourg judges has made an already complex piece of European employment law even more complex by opening a door for employers to throw off responsibility for workers.

John Monks, general secretary of the Trades Union Congress, said the judgment could mean that contracted workers would be stripped of job security. "Where there are small numbers of contracted workers, unscrupulous employers could use today's ruling to deny them their rights."

But employers are likely to use the ruling to step up the battle for contracts in the service sector, because it would enable them to keep costs down by not honouring the existing employment terms. The ruling is bad news for companies that lose contracts, however, as they will be left without the business but with all the costs of redundancies.

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Angela Browning: plans abattoir league tables

Meat hygiene rules

Continued from page 1

the AMI, has felt it necessary to allow this letter to be circulated. I am very surprised that the very body which has the enforcement role within the slaughterhouses should be criticising, because they are the people I expect to be carrying out this obligation.

The very fact that we have carried out official reprimands to inspectors and have been prepared to sack them shows that the MHS will

enforce the legislation and check the inspectors are doing their job."

Mr Conrie, who denied leaking his letters, said he had been prompted by hundreds of unsolicited letters from his members complaining about abattoir standards. He agreed that he had lost a contract with his local authority to inspect abattoirs when the Meat Hygiene Service came into operation, but said: "I haven't got a grudge against them."

Hume says abortion is election issue for Catholics

By DOMINIC KENNEDY
SOCIAL AFFAIRS
CORRESPONDENT

CARDINAL Basil Hume urged Roman Catholics yesterday to put abortion on the election agenda but declined to endorse the new Pro-life Alliance party.

The Archbishop of Westminster said that Catholic voters would be expected to find out candidates' opinions on the issue. They should withhold their votes from anybody who holds strong pro-abortion views, he said.

"The question of abortion is a public policy issue and it is very important that it now should be discussed prior to the election," Cardinal Hume told Radio 4's *Today* programme. "It is very important that the people that we elect should have views on abortion which we believe are the correct ones to have."

"We would be very hesitant, I think, to want to give a vote to somebody who is strongly in favour of abortion."

He declined to endorse the Pro-life Alliance, which expects to field 50 candidates on a strict anti-abortion, anti-euthanasia programme. "This is entirely a matter for each individual person to decide. It is not for the Church to give directions on how to vote."

Cardinal Hume did not define what he meant by "strongly in favour" of abortion but Bruno Quintavalle, a Catholic who founded the Pro-life Alliance, said any candidate who supported the status quo was in effect strongly in favour of abortion.

"Anyone who supports anything like the law as it stands is a militant pro-abortionist," said Mr Quintavalle. "We have abortion up to birth. We have virtually abortion on demand in the first two trimesters." The party hopes to field six Muslims. It will stand in constituencies where no candidate is anti-abortion, targeting figures such as Stephen Dorrell, the Health Secretary, and Gordon Brown, the Shadow Chancellor.

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Hume: said Catholics should ask candidates

Police cells must take jail overspill

By RICHARD FORD, HOME CORRESPONDENT

THE Prison Service is preparing to lead offenders in police cells as the number of prisoners rises by about 300 a week towards a record 60,000.

Police forces have been advised to be ready to take prisoners within the next two weeks when the 135 jails in England and Wales reach capacity. Prison governors warned yesterday that the system was at breaking point, with inmates being bussed around the country to find empty accommodation.

David Roddan, general secretary of the Prison Governors' Association, said: "Last week 134 prisoners were bussed from the North of England to the South to find empty cells — that is crazy. The Prison Service is chock-a-block."

Chris Scott, chairman of the governor's association, said the prison population had soared in the first few months of the year, reaching 59,156 at

the end of last week. He told the governors' annual conference at Buxton in Derbyshire: "Surely it is sensible to admit that we can no longer cope with the unprecedented rise. It is wise at a time when a rising prison population heightens the potential for disturbance to bring into place accommodation which in normal circumstances we would consider insecure."

Mr Scott said governors had a duty to point out to the public the inherent dangers of imprisoning more and more people in overcrowded conditions.

Ann Widdecombe became a record-breaker yesterday as the first prisons minister to visit all 129 jails in England and Wales. Miss Widdecombe, who took on her present Home Office job in July 1995, completed her odyssey at Spring Hill open prison at Grendon Underwood, Buckinghamshire.

Mackay does U-turn on fees after judges' rebuke

By FRANCES GIBB, LEGAL CORRESPONDENT

THE Lord Chancellor bowed yesterday to a High Court ruling against him last week and said he would reinstate rules to reduce or waive civil court fees on grounds of financial hardship.

Lord Mackay of Clashfern said he would reimburse fees paid by anyone who could show that they would have qualified under the rules for waivers or exemptions that were abolished in January.

The Lord Chancellor said he would not be seeking leave to challenge the High Court ruling last week, in which two judges held that he had acted unlawfully by introducing large rises in court fees at the same time as ending hardship exemptions. He had been expected to challenge his defeat.

the first he has suffered, all the way to the House of Lords.

The hardship provisions will now apply in county courts as well as in the High Court. Lord Mackay said he wanted to place "county court and family litigants on the same footing as litigants in the Supreme Court."

The move was welcomed by the Legal Action Group and the Law Society, which had urged the Lord Chancellor to reinstate the fee exemptions. Lord Mackay made clear, however, that he was uneasy about the possibility of spurious legal action being brought by people who did not have to pay court costs.

A statement said: "The Lord Chancellor remains concerned about the potential

injustice where litigants in person, who are exempted or remitted from court fees, bring unjustified actions against defendants who must then pay to defend themselves with no prospect of recovering their costs." The High Court judgment implied that this was a matter for Parliament, and he will "consider it further in this light."

The test case last week was brought by an Essex businessman on income support, who said he was barred by the new rules from taking libel action against an insurance firm.

Lord Justice Rose, sitting with Mr Justice Laws, said that the Lord Chancellor had denied poor people their ancient common law right of access to the courts.

Carey supports formation of Palestinian state

Continued from page 1

people may live in peace. "As I read it, I realised how much I take for granted the sense of belonging and identification I find in being British and being part of a proud and confident nation. Can I deprive others of that right? Surely not."

The sermon was delivered only a week before crucial talks, now very

much in jeopardy, on the final status of Jerusalem and other key issues.

"The world prays for the peace of Jerusalem because we know that if it is possible here, it is possible anywhere," Dr Carey told a congregation that included 35 Anglican archbishops. "Sympathetic outsiders such as myself can hear the justified longings of the two peoples of this land."

He added: "We are at one with the people of Israel in their search for a lasting peace. The Jewish peoples have suffered enough in their long and terrible journey. They long to dismantle their weapons and beat their swords into ploughshares."

Describing the Holy City as a place "where dreams collide", Dr Carey hit out at both Jewish and Palestinian

extremists, whom he accused of using the name of religion to justify murderous attacks.

"Often inflammatory words are backed up with financial support for extremist groups which murder innocent people and justify it in the name of religion," he said. "There can be no peace if violence is used to threaten and browbeat others."

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Arbroath and St Ives mourn loss

Seven fishermen feared drowned as boats capsize

By Gillian Bowditch, Scotland Correspondent, and Richard Duce

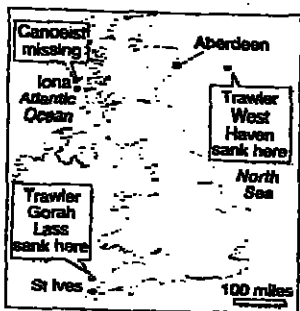
TWO fishing communities were in mourning yesterday as seven men were feared dead in separate accidents.

Hope faded for four fishermen from Arbroath, Angus, when their vessel was discovered on the seabed a hundred miles from the coast of Aberdeen in water 140ft deep. In St Ives, Cornwall, it became clear that three friends who went missing in thick fog after setting out to lay their fishing nets would not be coming home.

The men from Arbroath — skipper George Pattison, 38, first mate Mark Hannah, 30, Christopher Frouse, 22, and Alan Cunningham, 28 — are believed to have died when the *Westhaven* capsized and sank after its fishing tackle became caught on the seabed.

An intensive search involving ten boats, two helicopters and the warship *HMS Guernsey*, continued all day yesterday for the 65ft boat, which was trawling for white fish and prawns. Shortly before lunchtime the wreck was located and by afternoon a remote control camera identified it. There was no sign of the men. The search was called off after underwater cameras discovered that the two life rafts were still attached to the sunken vessel.

The distress of the men's families was compounded by



an eight-hour delay in launching the search because of confusion over boat names.

Mr Pattison, whose family have been fishing for several generations, bought the *Westhaven*, the largest boat in the Arbroath fleet, from Dannie Buchanan, a skipper from Fraserburgh, at Christmas. Mr Buchanan then bought a replacement boat, which he renamed the *Westhaven*. Both *Westhavens* were operating in the same area on Monday.

At about 11.15am, Aberdeen coastguard received a signal from a distress beacon. They traced the number to the Fraserburgh-registered *Westhaven* and, when Mr Buchanan confirmed that he was fine, he was asked to deactivate the beacon.

The coastguard continued to receive a distress signal throughout Monday afternoon and continued to try to locate the beacon. It was not

until about 5.30pm, when a lifebelt from the Arbroath-registered *Westhaven* was recovered, that it was realised a trawler had gone down.

Mr Buchanan said he had heard Mr Pattison's brother Gordon, skipper of the *Deerjy*, radioing to say his brother had reported getting his net caught on something at about 9.30am on Monday.

Peter Donald, manager of the Fishermen's Association in Arbroath, said: "The community here is numb with shock. It's the biggest disaster we have had in a long time. We've lost boats before and men before, but never a ship and crew together. Boats can be replaced; men can't."

At the other end of the country, the people of St Ives gathered on the quayside early yesterday out of respect rather than hope for the three Cornish fishermen lost at sea.

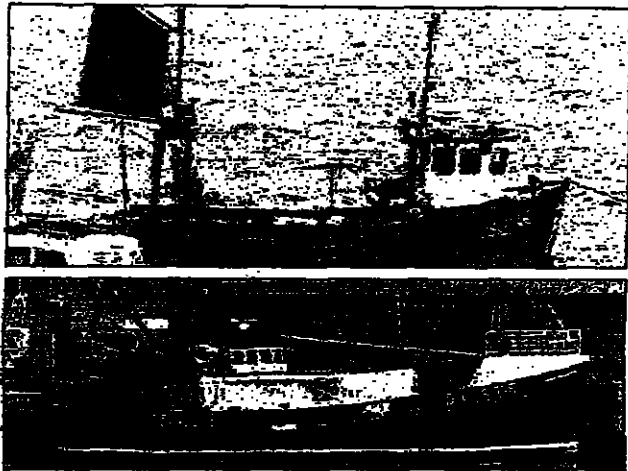
Their vessel, the *Gorah Lass*, was eventually found 300 ft down on the seabed two miles northwest of Portreath. The bodies of William Pirie, 40, and Steven Cooper were recovered, but there was no sign of the skipper, Philip Benney, 38.

The men had set out at 4pm on Monday to fish for Dover sole. An air-sea rescue search was launched when the boat vanished from radar screens at 4.45am yesterday.

Mr Pirie's widow, Paula, 37, said the crew had made all the necessary weather checks before setting out to sea.

Captain Phil Morran, honorary secretary of St Ives Lifeboat, said that the *Gorah Lass* had made contact with another fishing vessel, the *Endeavour*, and relayed the message she was about to haul in her nets and head for home. The *Endeavour* then received a garbled message and the captain saw that the *Gorah Lass* had disappeared from the radar screen. He alerted the coastguard.

Joan Symons, mayor of St Ives, said there would be an appeal to raise money for relatives of the drowned men.



The lost boats *Gorah Lass*, top, and the *Westhaven*

Missing canoeist's paddle found off coast of Iona

By Shirley English

A SOLO canoeist was feared drowned last night after her paddle was spotted five miles off the Scottish island of Iona. Gail Webster, 33, has been missing since Monday night after setting out from the West Coast isle at 5pm.

Yesterday lunchtime a helicopter from *HMS Gannet*, which had been searching for 12 hours, sighted the paddle to the northwest of Iona. Ms Webster, a care worker described as a very experienced canoeist, was reported missing by friends at 11pm on Monday when she failed to return home to her craft.

Islanders took to their fishing boats to assist Oban Coastguard and the Tobermory lifeboat in the search,

which continued around the coast throughout the night and was extended to a ten-mile radius of the island yesterday morning. Ms Webster had set out from Iona pier and was last seen by the crew of a fishing vessel, *Silver Spray*, about 5.30pm on Monday just north of the island's Findlay's Point. Oban Coastguard said the search had been hampered by the fact that the canoe was said to be a dull colour and difficult to spot.

On the Scottish mainland, the body of a climber who fell 500ft to his death was found yesterday by mountain rescuers after a two-hour search. The man, who has not been named, had been walking alone on Ben Vorlich and Stuc

a' Chroin near Lochearnhead. Central, when he is believed to have slipped and fallen from crags.

Tayside Police and the local mountain rescue team scoured the mountainside for two hours after the climber failed to return home. His body was found about midnight on Monday at the foot of crags on Stuc a' Chroin, a 3,208ft peak popular with walkers. The search began when the man's car was found at Ardvorlich, Lochearnhead.

The death is the latest in a series of accidents on the Scottish mountains this year. Three climbers were taken to hospital after weekend accidents on Ben Nevis and Am Bodach in Highland.

Fur flies as charity ditches supermodel

By Kathryn Knight

THE supermodel Naomi Campbell was sacked yesterday as the figurehead of an international animal charity for wearing a full-length fur coat in a fashion show.

Peta (People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals) accused the 26-year-old model of being a hypocrite after seeing her in animal skins at a show in Milan for Pendi, Italy's leading furrier. She appeared alongside other models, including Stella Tennant and Jodie Kidd, who wore mink, exotic leopard pelts and rare Scandinavian fox fur.

The charity had forgiven the model for wearing fur at an earlier show because she said she thought the outfit was fake. But after seeing the latest pictures, Dan Williams, head of Peta, wrote to her asking: "Are you the same person who tearfully told me, in New York and Paris, how disgusted you were by the needless suffering behind each fur?"

"Your name and image will be removed from all future Peta literature, as it is a disgrace to the many animal-friendly fashion leaders who

have both hearts and spines." Ms Campbell was one of 50 models, including Cindy Crawford and Tyra Banks, who joined Peta's "models of compassion" campaign four years ago and promised never to wear fur. She was one of five models who appeared naked in a Peta poster with the slogan: "We'd rather go naked than wear fur." She also campaigned on American television for the charity, which has more than 500,000 members worldwide.

A spokesman for Elite Premier, Ms Campbell's London agency, said the model had agreed to take part in only one campaign for Peta. The spokesman said that more models now wore fur because the industry had adopted more compassionate methods. An advert that showed a fox head which had been skinned has been banned by the Advertising Standards Authority. The British Fur Trade Association was among campaigners about the poster, produced by a group campaigning against cruelty to animals.

Mystery of actor's death in bike crash

By Tim Jones

A BRITISH actor who hoped to make his name in America died after his motorcycle crashed in mysterious circumstances, an inquest in west London was told yesterday. Mark Frankel, 34, who played a Jewish London estate agent who discovers his father is a Yorkshire pig rearer in *Leon the Pig Farmer*, died last September after falling off his Harley-Davidson in Chiswick, west London.

A police accident investigator said there was no apparent reason for the accident. Mr Frankel's widow, Caroline, 32, who was pregnant when he died, said her husband had always been fascinated by motorcycles and the one he had been riding was one of only six in the world. She said he was an extremely careful rider. The couple also had a three-year-old son.

Mr Frankel had appeared in a number of American television shows and his mother Grace said that he believed his future was in the States. An open verdict was recorded.



Young — and not so young — fans of Sir Paul McCartney outside Buckingham Palace for the former Beatle's investiture yesterday

It was thirty two years ago today...

By Joe Joseph

SIR PAUL MCCARTNEY kept looking over his shoulder for the other three. "It seems strange being here without them," he said. The former Beatle, who was at Buckingham Palace yesterday to receive his knighthood, added: "This brings back memories of 1965."

Sir Paul, who actually remembers the Sixties the first time they were fashionable, was dressed in traditional morning coat. He was staring through the palace gates at some screaming fans — neither quite as many as came to see the Beatles when they were made MBEs in 1965, nor probably quite so eager to rip off his clothes and lock themselves into a hotel bedroom with him for 48 hours.

Had he ever dreamt, back in the days of playing at the Cavern in Liverpool and in Hamburg, that he would be receiving a knighthood from the Queen? No, he had not. "It would have been seen as a joke," Sir Paul said.

The man who may have coined almost as many memorable phrases as Cole Porter grabbed an off-the-shelf cliché when asked what the knight-

hood meant to him. "This is one of the best days of my life." So much for drugs, transcendental meditation and love-ins, in that case.

"It's fantastic. The sky is blue and it's springtime. My mum and dad would have been extremely proud — and perhaps they are. It's just a huge honour. Coming from a small Liverpool terraced house to this house is quite a journey." He made the journey

in a chauffeur-driven blue Mercedes. George and Ringo still treat him as the same old Paul they always knew. "They call me Your Holiness," McCartney's wife, Linda, was not with him, but three of their four children — James, 19, Mary, 27, and Stella, 25 — were. "I would have loved the whole family to be here, but when we heard there were only three tickets, we had to draw straws, and Linda and Heather

decided to stay out of the limelight. We're going out to lunch. Linda will be there." And off he went, waving at the world through the Mercedes sunroof. But not before, in his own words, he had managed to get a plug in for his latest project. "I'm writing a full-length orchestral piece for the London Symphony Orchestra which is due to be performed at the Albert Hall on October 14."

Forced to play second fiddle to Sir Paul was Joan Collins, OBE, who received the insignia of the OBE. She was in lilac, with matching wide-brimmed hat. "To me, it's one of the reasons why I will always be British," she gushed. "I've lived in America for a long time and my friends ask me why I haven't become an American citizen."

And the answer? Because "I love everything that goes with being British." Except, presumably, actually living here. Any prospect, then, that this honour might persuade her to tarry awhile in Her Majesty's kingdom?

Certainly for lunch, with her artist son, Sacha. And then? "I'm going back to Los Angeles, where I'll be working on a TV project — but it's a secret."



Joan Collins, OBE, was forced to play second fiddle to Sir Paul

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Weekend, Weekend
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readers, and Car 97

Cabinet told to save £7m by tackling 'paper mountain'

By VALERIE ELLIOTT, WHITEHALL EDITOR

CABINET ministers were told yesterday that the ever-growing archives of government papers and documents should be cut back to save the taxpayer £7 million.

The call was immediately criticised by archivists, who said that the loss of documents to future historians might have serious consequences.

Sir Peter Levene, the Prime Minister's efficiency adviser, said that failure to tackle the storage problem would mean twice as much space being needed within eight years. At present seven billion pieces of paper are taking up 900 miles of space in warehouses and government departments at a cost of £35 million a year.

Among the papers which are identified for early destruction are: early drafts of consultative and policy papers; papers copied many times; personal files and notes on individual companies; agendas for meetings; stationery requisitions; and routine

letters from MPs which usually result in parliamentary answers in *Hansard*.

Sir Peter blames junior staff for playing safe with old files and recommending that they should be kept for longer than necessary, with no thought about storage costs.

Peter Hennessey, Professor of Contemporary History at Queen Mary and Westfield College, London, said that what was routine dress for one generation could be gold dust for later scholars: "The needs of posterity cannot be reduced to the thought levels or criteria of the management."

A government archivist said: "Who is to judge what is worthy of permanent preservation? If it's a low-level document dealing with an apparent non-issue, who says it won't come up again? Destruction of the records is so final, and staff do worry they are consigning a possible treasure to oblivion."

One of Sir Peter's main

recommendations is for the Public Record Office to take on a more strategic role in helping departments manage their records and make savings. He is concerned that departments are so haphazard and inefficient in handling documents that important historical material could be lost.

Some departments are behind in their review of documents which might be of public significance and Sir Peter said imposing penalties on those which fail to sort out the material should be considered. However, the Home Office and the Ministry of Defence were singled out for praise.

Sir Peter's report discloses that some departments pay as much as £70 a metre for storage space. The Department of Social Security, for example, paid £700 a year to keep a four-drawer cabinet in central London, while storing a slightly larger cabinet out of town cost £74.



The nose of the Eurostar train, which hit an empty cattle lorry in Belgium yesterday. No one was injured

Eurostar train crashes

An investigation was launched yesterday after a Eurostar train hit a lorry at a level crossing in Belgium. The train, from Brussels to London, was carrying 107 passengers and ten crew, but none of them, nor the driver of the empty cattle lorry, were injured. Eurostar said the

driver had used his emergency brake and that the train had been travelling much slower than the 50mph maximum for the stretch of line when it hit the lorry at Ath, 30 miles from Brussels. The passengers were taken by coach to Lille, where they boarded another train.

TV to show life of gay servicewoman

By CAROL MIDDLEY

CHANNEL 4 is to revive controversy about the treatment of homosexuals in the Armed Forces with a film about a lesbian officer in the Royal Military Police.

The *Investigator* will tell the true story of a military police-woman who joined the Special Investigation Branch to root out homosexuals. Channel 4 said the drama-documentary was based on the experiences of an unnamed servicewoman in the 1950s, who was a consultant to the film.

The Ministry of Defence declined to assist the makers of the 90-minute film. David Green, managing director of September Films, said: "The Ministry has been given every opportunity in the two years we have been developing this project to co-operate. We have been very open with them."

The main character is played by Helen Baxendale, who appeared in the hospital



Baxendale will play part of investigator

drama series *Cardiac Arrest*. She realises that she is a lesbian, but refuses to admit her homosexuality because it would end her career. She is dismissed on a technicality relating to expenses.

The Ministry of Defence said: "We cannot comment on this film until we have seen it." The *Investigator* will be shown in May after 9pm.

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Wigan rugby chief 'plotted bogus deal to aid libel case'

By RUSSELL JENKINS

THE chairman of Wigan Rugby League Club planned a bogus transfer deal so that he could sue a newspaper for thousands of pounds, a court was told yesterday.

Jack Robinson tried to tempt Alfred Davies, the chief executive of Leeds, into a scheme involving Neil Cowie, the Wigan and international prop forward, to inflate potential libel damages from the *Wigan Observer*. It was alleged, Mr Davies bluntly turned the offer down.

The alleged plot began in February after Mr Robinson told the *Wigan Observer* that he blamed a team holiday in Tenerife for Wigan's shock exit from the Challenge Cup quarter-finals after a run of 43 wins. The newspaper later published an article claiming that the players had been involved in an "all-night drinking binge" and pictured Mr Cowie, 30, among the revellers.

Alan Conrad, for the prosecution, said that Mr Cowie, who was not on the trip, had intended to sue but that Mr Robinson decided to "use the newspaper's mistake to his financial advantage".

In telephone calls to Mr Davies, his friend for 18 years, Mr Robinson suggested he should say that Leeds had been interested in a transfer deal for Mr Cowie, worth



Robinson: denies trying to pervert justice

£150,000, but had backed off in the wake of the newspaper story, Mr Conrad said. Mr Robinson offered splitting the profits of a subsequent libel action 50-50, which he then pushed up to 60-40 when Mr Davies refused to bite. It was alleged. Nevertheless, Carl Johnston, 32, the newspaper's editor, later received a letter from Mr Robinson's solicitors claiming that Mr Cowie's transfer deal had been called off because of the article. It demanded a retraction and payment of damages.

Mr Davies told the court that Mr Robinson had interrupted him in a board meeting to propose the scheme. Mr Robinson had said the newspaper had been giving him a lot of trouble. "Quite frankly I was shocked. I said: Jack, you must be out of your mind to

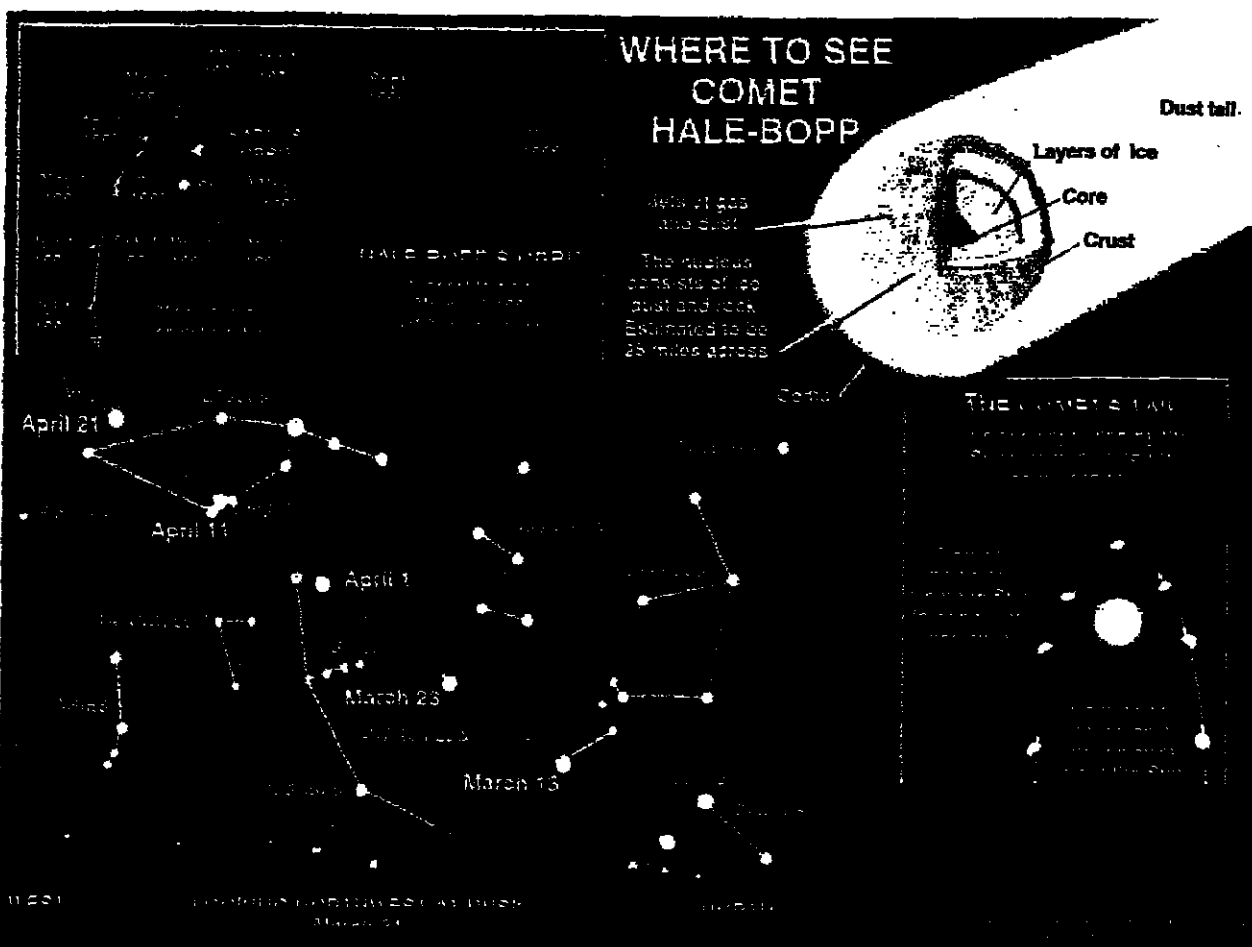
think of something like this. We'll finish up in jail."

Mr Davies said that Mr Robinson had then suggested that Mr Cowie was "sound" on the deal and that John Martin, a fellow director and the player's father-in-law, should not be a worry because "it is his idea".

Mr Cowie told the court he was surprised to read of the transfer deal. "I was offended. I was quite upset that the club had been making a deal at that time and that my father-in-law had been involved and he hadn't said anything. I thought I had given good service and I deserved a little better than that."

Mr Robinson, 55, who has led the club to unprecedented success, denies intending to pervert the course of justice between February 20 and March 7 last year and two charges of incitement to make a false instrument. The trial continues.

League preview, page 45



TO SEE Hale-Bopp, get up before dawn or watch the sky after sunset. A dark place is best. Pick a clear night — Hale-Bopp will not disappear until May. Allow time for your eyes to become accustomed to the darkness and face northwest. The comet should

be clearly visible low in the sky. Hale-Bopp was identified in 1995 and has been getting closer and brighter ever since. It is one of the largest comets recorded, with a nucleus estimated at 25 miles across, ten times the average comet and four times larger than

Halley's comet. But it will never come nearer to Earth than 122 million miles, more than 12 times further away than last year's comet, Hyakutake. It is clear that Hale-Bopp will be one of the so-called Great Comets — the eighth and possibly the last this century.

Engineers pay £5m for damaging RAF jets

By MICHAEL EVANS
DEFENCE CORRESPONDENT

A FIRM that damaged 16 RAF Tornados during modification work has agreed to pay £5 million compensation to the Ministry of Defence.

Airwork won the contract to modify the Tornados in 1992 and began work at the RAF base at St Athan, South Wales, the following year. The contract was terminated in 1993 after it was found that holes for fasteners and bolts in the main structure had been badly made, damaging the surfaces.

British Aerospace, which had been undercut by £4 million on the original contract, was called in to repair the aircraft. Eleven are back in service but they had to be fitted with central fuselage sections taken from the older F2 version of the fighter.

A MoD spokesman said that the cost of the damage and repairs was estimated to total £20 million, but Sussex-based Airwork had paid only a quarter of that because the F2 parts had given the aircraft extra "fatigue life".

Poison risk of tuna sandwich

By JEREMY LAURANCE, HEALTH CORRESPONDENT

TWO men who developed rashes on their face and upper body after eating tuna fell victim to a rare form of poisoning, doctors report today.

One had eaten freshly cooked tuna in a wine bar and the other a tuna mayonnaise sandwich made with the tinned product. Both developed a swollen throat, flushing, headache and diarrhoea, but recovered within a few hours. Another customer of the wine bar fell ill, as did six people who had eaten the same sandwiches.

The little-known hazard of one of the most popular sandwiches, fillings is described by Dr Ian Stell, of Guy's Hospital, southeast London, in the *Journal of Accident and Emergency Medicine*. He said they were victims of scombrototoxic poisoning, which affects about 50 people a year in Britain. "This is not a public health issue. It is not a serious illness. I would not want to discourage people from eating tuna," he said. He hoped to

alert doctors in accident and emergency departments who might mistake similar symptoms for an allergy to fish.

The poisoning is caused by contamination by rare strains of bacteria which convert the histidine naturally present in the fish to toxic levels of histamine, the chemical present in nettles and similar plants which produces a skin rash. The condition, which normally resolves in a few hours, takes its name from the scombroid family of red-fleshed fish to which tuna and mackerel belong. It also occurs after eating pilchards, sardines and anchovies.

Affected fish often look and smell normal, but may have a hot or peppery taste when eaten. The histamine is not destroyed by cooking or the canning process.

Tests showed that the tuna served at the wine bar contained 40 times the normal safe level of histamine. The tinned tuna used in the sandwiches contained 50 times the safe limit.



MEDICAL BRIEFING

Typhoid case may remain a mystery

THERE are up to 200 cases of typhoid each year in Britain. The majority are caught abroad and develop at home after an eight to 21-day incubation period. A case that has been diagnosed in Glamorgan is of importance as the girl patient has had no obvious contact with anyone who had recently been overseas. It may turn out to be one of the sporadic cases in which the source of the infection is not identified: a year or two ago there were two cases in Whitechapel, east London.

An infection with the bacillus *Salmonella typhi* is always of human origin, but it may be spread by flies that have previously settled on infected excreta or other body fluids. Usually the organism is ingested by the patient on contaminated food, water or in infected shellfish. Once it has gone through the intestine into the blood, it reaches the spleen and the liver where it multiplies in numbers. A contaminated water supply is the most common cause of a large epidemic, and it was inadequate drains at Windsor Castle which were thought to be responsible for the attack from which Prince Albert died.

His recent biography of the Prince, by Stanley Weintraub, gives a very good account of the disease and would be useful reading to any doctor in

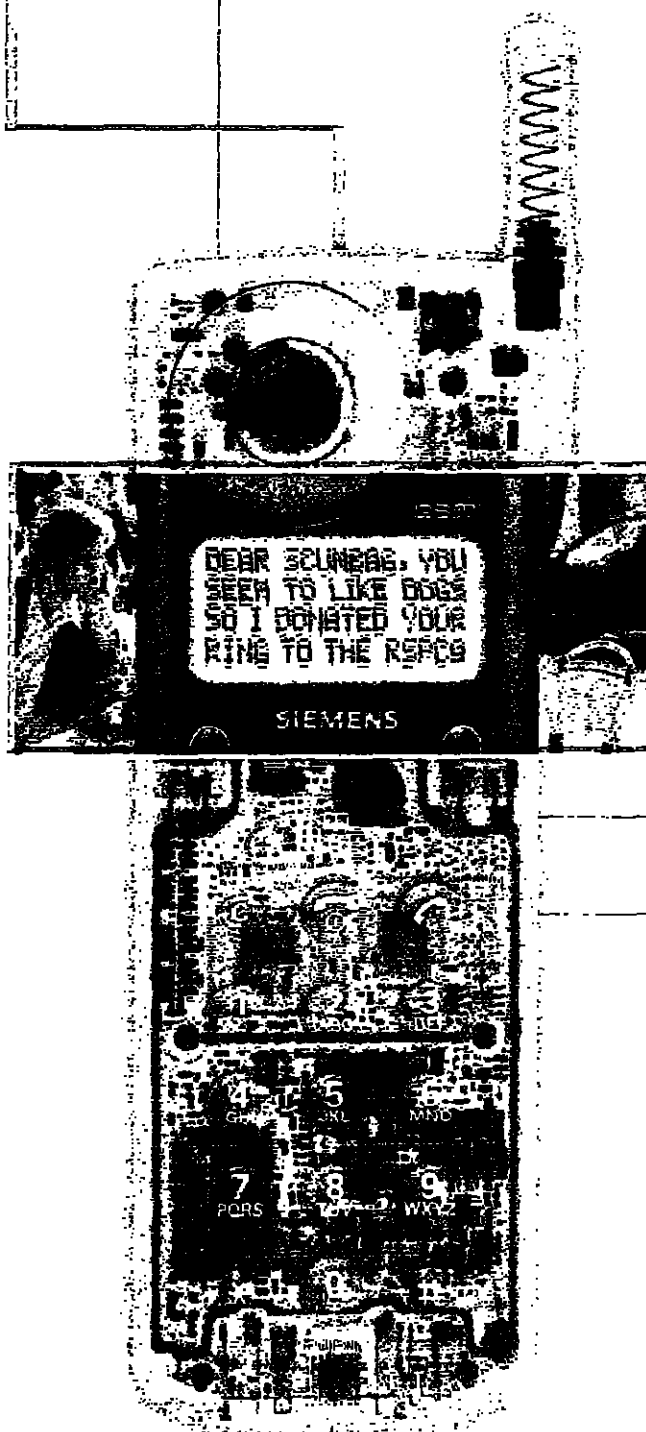
the Glamorgan area. Prince Albert, like many other patients, initially felt no more than unwell and weak with severe limb pains and, it is to be presumed, a headache. As his three-week illness developed, his mind varied between periods of extreme lucidity and delirious incoherence interrupted by delusions, so that at times he thought that he could hear birds singing. During the illness, the fever varied in intensity but slowly increased: he suffered distressing insomnia, complete absence of appetite, and such severe nausea that even a mouthful of soup induced vomiting: he lost weight and was already wasting away before the classic rose pink rash of typhoid appeared.

It is said that to diagnose typhoid fever, a doctor needs a high degree of suspicion coupled with experience of earlier cases. Despite the disease's present day rarity, the Glamorgan patient seems to have been diagnosed very much more rapidly than was the Prince Consort. She is making excellent progress, as would be expected, for typhoid now responds to one, or both, of two antibiotics, chloramphenicol and amoxycillin.

DR THOMAS
STUTTAFFORD

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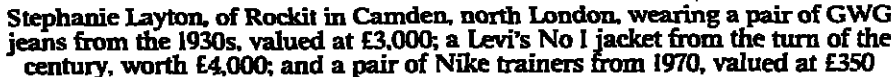
BY CHRISTINE BUCKLEY AND JOHN O'LEARY

If the scheme is approved, BAE will either build a full university or incorporate sites at its main research and manufacturing centres at Farnborough, Surrey, and Watlington, Oxfordshire. The company would like to convince the education authorities that the university had sufficient teaching capacity and autonomy for it to be allowed to award degrees. BAE said it

Science spiced up for girls

IAN TAYLOR, the Science Minister, yesterday launched a new publication, *X²: The Mystery of the Vanishing Girls*, designed in the style of youth magazines to show girls that science is a good career choice. While girls do well in science GCSEs, they tend to drop the subjects at A level. There are four boys for every girl doing A-level physics. A report by the Department of Trade and Industry, *Breaking the Mould*, concludes that girls are often alienated by the impersonal content of science, preferring subjects with a creative and socially relevant context.

Engineering does not enjoy the high status in Britain that it occupies in other parts of the world. Courses in other parts of Europe and the Far East command among the highest entry requirements of all degree subjects and take five years, rather than the norm of three in Britain.



BY DAMLAN WHITWORTH

There are very few examples of the first jeans, made from a heavy twill-weave cotton fabric from Genoa, known in Britain as jene

As well as antique denim, the precursors of the fashionable modern training shoe are also commanding increasingly large sums. A pair of Nike shoes from the early 1970s in reasonable condition could fetch £350.

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BY PAUL WILKINSON

Klaus Hansch, the former president of the European Parliament, justified the policy

Mr Bolton said: "The argument he uses is disgraceful. I can see no reason why the same argument could not be used to exclude people on the grounds of race, gender or religion."

The judges said they did not understand why the police, safety executive or council did not alert the CPS earlier. Beedie would then have faced a manslaughter charge in the first case.

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Neanderthal man: team hopes to extract DNA

Neanderthal fossils may reveal our missing link

By Nigel Hawkes
Science Editor

SCIENTISTS hope to answer one of the greatest questions about human origins by extracting DNA from the fossils of Neanderthal man.

Success should tell us if Neanderthal man is our ancestor, as some experts believe, or if he was merely a side-shoot on our family tree, with no descendants. Chris Stringer, of the Natural History Museum, who believes the latter theory, cited last week's report that DNA had been taken from Cheddar Man, who lived in the Stone Age.

"If it is possible to get DNA from Cheddar Man, who lived 9,000 years ago, why not from Neanderthal man, who lived 30,000 years ago?" he said. He has been exploring caves in Gibraltar, one of which contains the remains of a Neanderthal child whose DNA may be recoverable.

Bryan Sykes, of the Institute of Molecular Medicine at Oxford, which extracted DNA from Cheddar Man, has been working on Neanderthal remains from Israel, so far without success. The Gibraltar boy is next to be tested.

If Neanderthal man is our ancestor, his DNA would be a close match with some of the peoples of Europe. It should be possible to identify direct descendants. "My view is that it would be completely different, showing that Neanderthal man left no descendants," Dr Stringer said. This would strengthen the theory that modern humans evolved in Africa and colonised the world from there.

Why more tourists spent less cash Economy wilted as Britain sweltered in summer of '95

By Nick Nuttall, Environment Correspondent

THE hot, dry summer of 1995 had a huge impact on the economy and our way of life, scientists said yesterday. The number of fires soared; the fertility of pigs and chickens fell; and the water, fire and road maintenance services were stretched to the limit.

Researchers from the University of East Anglia, who have been trying to ascertain the impact of global warming on Britain, say that while the impact on some areas of the economy was beneficial, on others it was negative and costly. Their report, commissioned by the Department of the Environment, says that the way some sectors of the economy operate must be reappraised if they are to survive global warming.

Dr Susan Subak said yesterday that the impact on the British holiday industry had been the most surprising. While 1995 was a bumper year for holidays in Britain, with the number of long and short breaks rising by as much as 30 per cent, trippers spent hundreds of millions of pounds less than in previous years. "We can only speculate that when the weather is better, people are not indoors spending money and buying things," Dr Subak said.

John Gummer, the Environ-

ment Secretary whose constituency covers the coast of Suffolk, said the findings confirmed his own observations. He said the tourist industry in Felixstowe dreaded really good weather.

"What they want is decent enough weather [to attract day trippers], but not the hot weather. This is because people do not then go on rides, they do not go on the slot machines, but enjoy themselves on the beach."

The researchers say that as well as the seaside towns, there are implications for heritage towns and leading museums, art galleries and other cultural attractions that rely increasingly on visitors rather than state handouts to survive.

"In recent years there has been heavy investment in all-weather leisure centre facilities to counter the vagaries of the British weather," the report says.

Jean Palutikof of the university said these centres may turn out to be white elephants as people become more like Americans, interested in outdoor pursuits such as walking, camping and cycling. "In the past the British tourist industry has been into weather protection. It is now going to have to move away from this and look at how it can make

money out of outdoor pursuits," he said.

An increase in dry, hot weather and a switch to holidays at home carries a cost. Accidental grassland and forest fires, as well as those started deliberately, were 54 per cent higher in 1995 than in the previous year. At the height of the summer, calls to the Warwickshire fire service increased from an average of 50-75 a day to 400 a day.

The weather in 1995 cost agriculture £180 million. Whereas arable crops showed a gain of £30 million, livestock losses amounted to about £207 million: trout farms lost £4 million during the drought.

The potato crop fell, as did the pig population. The researchers say a 1 per cent decline in pigs was being linked to a drop in fertility. Rising temperatures caused a rise in embryo mortality and sows spent less time feeding litters and more time wallowing to keep cool. "Possible adaptive measures include using sprinklers and more wallows to offset the hot conditions," the report says.

The researchers say some sectors are already addressing the prospect of warmer weather: asphalt similar to that used in southern Australia is being developed to avoid melting roads. The railways are trying rails that do not buckle in the heat.

Mr Gummer said the findings strengthened the need to cut back emissions of carbon dioxide and other greenhouse gases. At a meeting last week in Bonn, the European Union called for a 10 per cent cut in emissions by 2010.

But Mr Gummer, looking forward to the big summit in Kyoto, Japan, in December, said: "We were sorry to find that yet again the United States, Australia and Japan do not understand the urgency of the situation. The US in particular failed to show the leadership that it needs to do as the world's biggest waster of energy."

THE HIGHS AND LOWS OF WARMING

- A 1C rise in temperature would lead to 7,000 fewer deaths a year, mainly because of milder winters. But cases of food poisoning would rise by 5 per cent, or 4,000.
- Retailers lost £383 million of business in 1995, mainly due to a sharp decline in clothes sales, only partly offset by an increase in beer and fruit sales.
- The transport sector lost £16 million of business. A mild winter, with fewer delays to road, rail and airline travellers was offset by heat damage to roads and slower train speeds because of fires and buckling track.
- There were 113,361 more fires in 1995 and a "substantial" increase in the cost of fighting them.
- The insurance industry paid out £326 million in subsidence claims as a result of the drought.
- Wheat and cereal crops fared well, but potatoes and carrots did not.
- Consumers saved £220 million in energy bills because of the mild winter.



Ian and Sandra Marshall with their daughters Sarah, left, and Tracy

Robbers shoot shopkeeper who defied crime wave

By Russell Jenkins

A SHOPKEEPER who had pledged not to be driven out of a troubled estate by criminals was shot dead when he tackled two masked robbers.

Ian Marshall, 43, discovered his father-in-law being held at gunpoint at the back of his grocery and off-licence in Sale, near Manchester. He was shot three times in the head and chest after going to his aid.

Paramedics called to the shop at about 10pm on Monday had to wait 23 minutes for police to declare the area safe. They put on flak jackets before entering and finding the body.

Mr Marshall had run the shop on the Racecourse council estate for 15 years and was renowned for his friendliness. The estate has been a target for crime: residents said there had been several raids on the post office and that Mr Marshall had been threatened

several times before. Detectives believe that he may have injured one of the robbers with a knife he had been working with just before he died. They are looking for two black men, one 6ft tall and the other 5ft 8in. They were wearing balaclavas and dark clothing.

Mr Marshall's wife, Sandra, and their daughters Tracy, 19, and Sarah, 17, were being comforted by relatives yesterday at their home in Streteford. His father-in-law, William, is believed to have suffered a severe asthma attack during the shooting.

Tracy Marshall said last night: "If somebody was trying to rob him, he would try to fight back. I just wish he hadn't, then he might be alive today. But I don't think there was anything I could have done to change him."

"He was a wonderful father and I know everyone in the

community around the shop is very upset about what has happened." Wreaths were laid near the spot where he died yesterday.

Richard Keane, 22, a resident of the estate, said: "He always said he would not be forced out by criminals on the estate. Everyone is badly shocked." Susan Lewis, 30, a neighbour of the shopkeeper, said: "Ian committed crime and vowed never to become a victim. He often worked late with his wife and father-in-law. Just a few weeks ago he was threatened by a man with a knife."

Maureen Wright, 59, said: "He was a lovely family man who used to send Christmas cards to all his customers. He was kind to everybody. Only on Monday night he asked my four-year-old grandson Stuart if he had been good and gave him a packet of crisps."

Accused 'pointed gun after car chase in Mini'

By Russell Jenkins

A DRIVER threatened to shoot another motorist in the head with a revolver after a traffic argument, a court was told yesterday.

Ian Machin, 27, of Swinton, Greater Manchester, was said to have tracked down Michael Chaloner to his parents' house after an argument on the road led to a chase that left both their vehicles damaged.

Waiting for Mr Chaloner to appear, he threatened his mother, Sylvia, 55, with the gun, opened the chamber to show her that the bullets were real and said that he was going to kill her son, Minshull Street Crown Court in Manchester was told.

When Mr Chaloner arrived with his father in their camper van, Mr Machin ran up to the cabin and held the gun at their faces shouting, "You're dead... you owe me money," before shooting out a tyre.

Mr Chaloner, 25, a painter and decorator, also of Swinton, told the court: "I was scared. We tried to reverse the camper van, but he shot out the tyre. Afterwards we went into the house to get the police. My mother was already on the telephone screaming and in a distraught state."

Mr Machin denies illegal possession of a firearm, having it with intent to cause fear and making a threat to kill, and charges of affray.

The incident, last October, began when Mr Chaloner clashed with Mr Machin on a road in Swinton. Mr Machin was said to have come up behind him at speed as Mr Chaloner pulled out to avoid a parked car, causing Mr Machin's Mini to take evasive action. There was an argument and insults were exchanged.

When Mr Machin stopped his car in front of the van, Mr Chaloner pulled down a side street to escape. William Baker, for the prosecution, said that there was a chase as Mr Chaloner tried to get away from his pursuer. When Mr Machin tried to block the road, Mr Chaloner drove through a gap damaging both the van and the Mini. The trial continues.

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MPs BACK EUROPE 97

Last week, the European Movement launched *Europe 97*, a major information campaign to give British people the facts about the benefits of our EU membership. It features a leaflet giving '97 reasons to be in Europe'. Today, 97 MPs of all parties publish a statement supporting that campaign.

Europe is a crucial issue for Britain's future, and it is important that the British people have the facts about what being in Europe means for them. The *Europe 97* information campaign is an important and timely initiative, and deserves wide support.

Britain has benefited enormously from being a member of the European Union.

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Inquiry ordered into 'sectarianism' at minister's office

By Audrey Magee
IRELAND CORRESPONDENT

SIR PATRICK MAYHEW, the Northern Ireland Secretary, ordered an inquiry yesterday into allegations of sectarian harassment in the private office of one of his junior ministers.

The independent inquiry will examine the role of Baroness Denton of Wakefield, who is alleged to have flouted the province's fair employment rules and condoned sectarianism. The dispute has been aggravated by a series of leaks to the media, fuelling suspicions of a sectarian motive.

Sir Patrick said that criticism of Baroness Denton, who has responsibility for the Northern Ireland's fair employment legislation, was unjust and without foundation. She had his "entire confidence and support".

Lady Denton, the Economy and Agriculture Minister, has resisted pressure to resign over her handling of two cases within her private office. In the first and more serious case, a Roman Catholic woman member of staff at the Department of Agriculture was the victim of sectarian harassment by a Protestant private secretary. Last month Grainne Hedley, a married woman in her mid-30s, was awarded £10,000 by the Fair Employment Commission for the harassment inflicted by Alvin Saunders during the siege of Drumcree in 1995.

Mrs Hedley's complaint stemmed from comments made by Mrs Saunders that she was glad that Orangemen were able to go ahead with a parade in Portadown in July 1995. Mrs Saunders's remarks were regarded by Mrs Hedley, a diary secretary, to be triumphalist.

However, contrary to Northern Irish law, Mrs Hedley, who has spent 16 years in the Civil Service, was transferred while Mrs Saunders stayed as private secretary to the minister. Confidential documents show that Baroness Denton approved of and facilitated Mrs Hedley's transfer.

In the second case, Lady Denton was said to have breached the Government's fair employment procedures by appointing a private travelling secretary who was not shortlisted for the post. Susan Foster applied directly to the minister rather than through the normal procedures.

Sir Patrick insisted that the Northern Ireland Office has also ordered an inquiry into leaks to the media. It is to be led by Bill Irwin, a retired Whitehall official.



Denton: resisting pressure to resign

Lady Denton had not ordered the 1995 transfer and knew nothing about the alleged sectarian element in the case. He said: "Jean Denton has proved herself a fine, fair and tireless worker for all in Northern Ireland, regardless of gender or tradition."

But the allegations have outraged Catholics. The SDLP and Sinn Féin have said that her position is untenable.

Lady Denton, a 61-year-old former racing driver — twice British women's champion — is steadfast. "It is not my intention to resign," she said.

She is a high-profile figure in Northern Ireland. Her appointment to office in 1994 was welcomed by both sides of the political divide. However, it is understood there has been tension between her and some civil servants over the way she has imposed her will and rejected their advice.

She worked as Health Minister before taking on economic affairs and has worked hard to place women's issues centre stage. She successfully fought breast cancer and is admired by many for her hard work.

The inquiry will be chaired by Dr. Maurice Hayes, a retired Roman Catholic permanent secretary in the Northern Ireland Civil Service, and former Ombudsman in Northern Ireland. He is due to complete the report by mid-April.

The Northern Ireland Office has also ordered an inquiry into leaks to the media. It is to be led by Bill Irwin, a retired Whitehall official.



ELECTION FERMENT GENERATES FRESH HEAD OF POLITICAL FROTH

Parties are striving to turn the beer drinker's head

By Polly Newton
POLITICAL REPORTER

LABOUR and Tory spokesmen, each presenting his party as the true champion of consumers' rights, argued over a pint of beer yesterday.

Nigel Griffiths said that under a Labour government pubs would have to serve beer in bigger glasses, ensuring that drinkers were given a full measure.

But Charles Hendry, a Tory party vice-chairman, said that Labour's proposed minimum wage would force up the price of a pint by as much as 10p, adding: "Drinkers up and down the country would find that hard to swallow."

Mr Hendry's claim is supported by a new leaflet quoting Anthony Fuller, chairman of the London-based family brewer Fuller, Smith and Turner. Mr Fuller bases the 10p increase — on beer served

in the company's managed houses — on a minimum wage set at £4 an hour.

Labour has not set a rate for the minimum wage, although it has not accepted the TUC's recommended £4.26 an hour. It is expected that a Labour government would set the hourly rate at about £3.50.

Mr Griffiths, Labour's consumer affairs spokesman, said that drinkers were entitled to a full liquid pint, not including the froth at the top of the glass. "Loyal beer drinkers are fed up with the excuses of some brewers for not giving them the full pint they have paid for."

His announcement was welcomed by Camra, the Campaign for Real Ale. Ben Wardle, a spokesman, said a survey had shown that one in four pints contained less than the brewing industry guideline of 95 per cent liquid. "This should be an absolute mini-

mum, but it is in danger of becoming the norm. If the industry can't do anything about it, then the Government should."

Mr Wardle said that customers were being cheated of an estimated £1 million a day by pubs serving short measures. Glasses marked with pint-level lines were the best solution.

But the Brewers and Licensed Retailers Association is against the proposal, arguing that the cost of introducing new glasses would have to be passed to the customer. "The head is part of a pint of beer," the association said. "If customers think they are given too big a head, then they can ask for it to be topped up."

The Department of Trade and Industry said ministers believed that the cost of changing the law would be "disproportionate to the consumer benefit".

The pro-Europe majority is fighting back

RIDDELL
ON POLITICS

The Eurosceptics have made the running at Westminster and in the press for so long that it is easy to forget that there is a sizeable majority, both in the Commons and among business-

men, in favour of a positive British role in the European Union. That is the significance of the advertisement in *The Times* today, organised by the European Movement, and signed by 97 MPs of all main parties. This says it is crucial that Britain should remain "a full and committed member of the EU" and gives warning that "to contemplate leaving the EU is to contemplate disaster". Nor by coincidence, the phrase "full and committed member" also appears in yesterday's CBI sponsored letter to the *Financial Times* signed by 23 leading industrialists.

The signatories on both lists will no doubt be dismissed by the sceptics as the voices of the Establishment. And so they are. But being part of the Establishment does not necessarily mean you are wrong, however much the sceptics, including some High Tory figures, like to depict themselves as populists.

The businessmen include the chairmen or chief executives of the leading British companies in aerospace, air travel, telecommunications, chemicals, food, steel, electronics, oil and drugs. The politicians' list includes three former Cabinet ministers, 17 other former ministers, and ten current Labour front-benchers. Many are senior MPs, including 22 retiring at the election, while just 23 have entered the Commons over the past ten years.

Today's advertisement and yesterday's letter are a much-needed corrective to the unreality of the recent debate over Europe. Much of the rhetoric of the sceptics is absurdly over the top in conjuring up a sinister vision of an all powerful Brussels and Germany. The full alternatives are seldom addressed. The sceptics contrast a European super-state with a comfortable sounding looser arrangement following a painless renegotiation. But that option is not available. We cannot have the advantages of the single market without accepting institu-

tions such as the European Court of Justice.

Once the real alternatives, and benefits of the EU, are highlighted, I have little doubt that the public would again support our membership in any referendum. A cautiously positive view is suggested by yesterday's survey by Opinion Research Business for the European Commission. Yet the Tory party may have to go through many convulsions, and possible splinters, before it recognises that reality. This is similar not just to Labour's travails over Europe from the late 1960s until the late 1980s, but also its twists and turns over nuclear defence. Just as Labour could never have been elected with an explicitly unilateralist programme, so the Tories would be unelectable if they became openly hostile to British membership of the EU. I doubt if they will — not least because of the weight of business opinion.

But the swing in the sceptical direction during the 1990s has made the leaderships of both parties cautious. Worried by polls and focus groups, Tony Blair's advisers do not want him to be outflanked by the Tories on Europe, and have been suggesting that Labour would probably not take Britain into a single currency in January 1999. But that should not be mistaken for Euroscepticism. A Blair government, particularly one with a solid majority in the Commons, would take a distinctively pro-European line. As on so many other issues, the precise outcome will depend on the Gordon Brown/Robin Cook rivalry.

Unlike their counterparts in the rest of Europe, many pro-European businessmen and politicians wish that the issue of monetary union was not on the agenda now. Neither the advertisement nor the letter mentions the single currency because the signatories are divided on its merits. But both initiatives demonstrate that pro-Europeans are determined to fight back.

PETER RIDDELL

Crime Bill defeat may stand

By James Landale

MINISTERS conceded yesterday that they might be unable to overturn the Government's latest defeat in the House of Lords.

Opposition peers voted by 109 to 67 in favour of a substantial amendment to the Crime and Punishment (Scotland) Bill. The amendment was to ensure that new remission and parole do not result in longer sentences. Michael

Forsyth, the Scottish Secretary, said the defeat meant that rapists and other criminals would be released earlier in Scotland and accused Labour of being soft on crime.

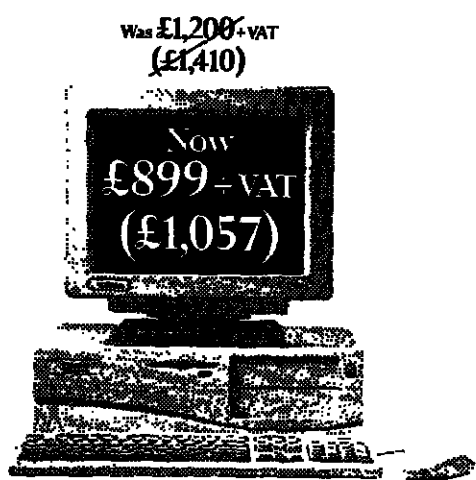
Lord Mackay of Drumadoon, the Lord Advocate, said that there might not be enough parliamentary time before the election to overturn the amendment. The defeat is a further complication for ministers who are striving to clear a huge logjam of legisla-

tion in the Lords before Parliament is dissolved, possibly before Easter. Four substantial Bills and 26 smaller measures are now before peers.

IN PARLIAMENT

TODAY in the Commons: backbench debates; Foreign Office questions; Representation of the People, European Parliamentary Elections and Local Elections orders; National Health Service (Primary Care) Bill; debate on prescribing of Lanxan. In the Lords: debates on the need for an integrated transport policy; the rural economy; London Local Authorities Bill.

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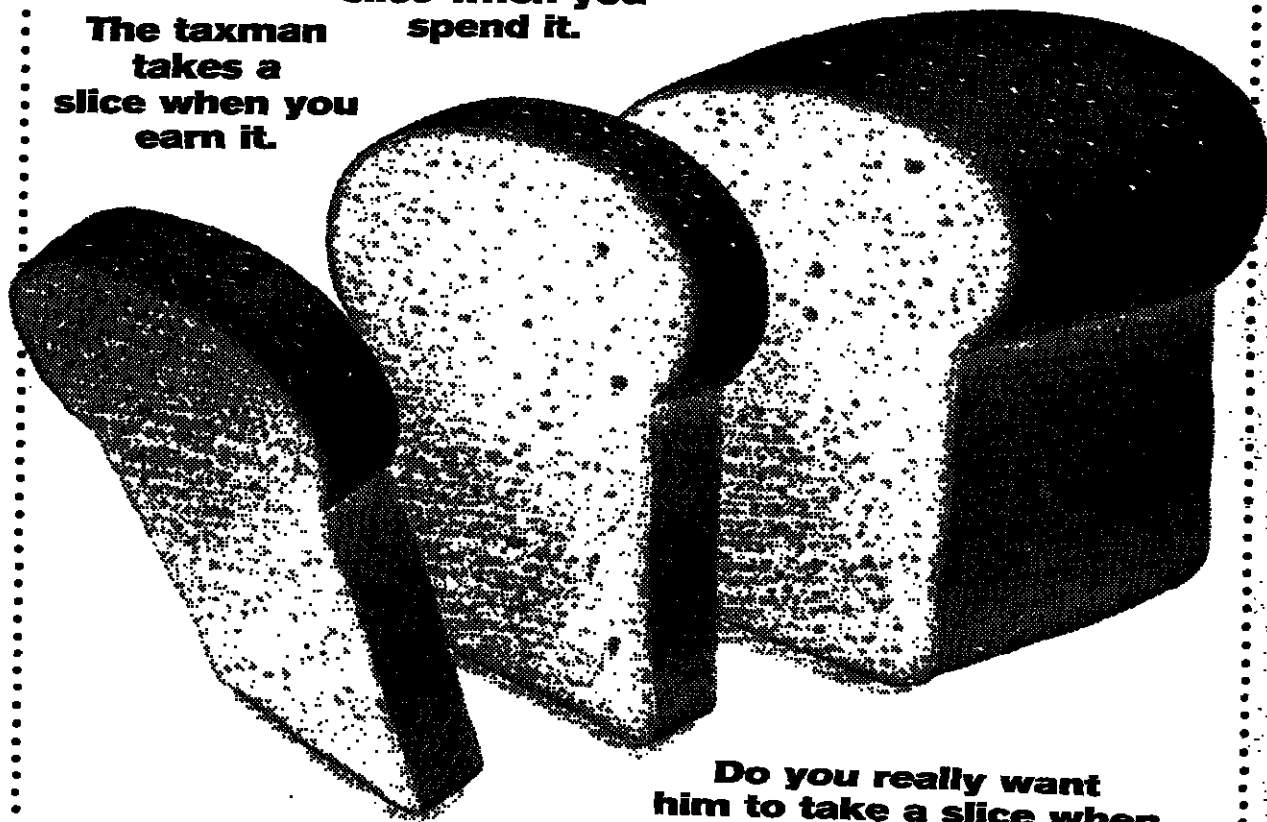
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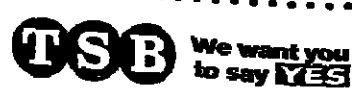
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Gynaecology denied virus

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Gynaecologist who denied having Aids virus is struck off

By ADRIAN LEE

THE gynaecologist at the centre of an HIV scare involving 1,700 women was ordered to be struck off by the General Medical Council yesterday.

Patrick Ngosa, 39, who feared he almost certainly had the Aids virus, but continued to practise, was ordered to be removed from the register for putting his patients at risk.

Dr Ngosa lied blatantly, covered up an affair with a woman who was HIV positive and caused his patients mental suffering by delaying a test for the virus, a disciplinary hearing was told.

Determined to keep working at almost any cost, he had betrayed his patients and the public. His actions were driven by fear of public exposure and the stigma of having the virus, the General Medical Council's professional conduct committee was told. He was terrified of losing his job and his marriage after his affair with the divorcee, named only as Mrs A.

Dr Ngosa, who is thought to have fled to his native Zambia, worked at five NHS hospitals in Essex, Warwickshire and Gloucestershire between 1991 and last January. He knew, from May last year, that he could be HIV positive, but ignored repeated requests by the medical authorities to undergo a test.

Rosalind Foster, for the GMC, said: "This case is about a doctor's disregard of his professional responsibility, his determination to remain in practice at almost all costs, irrespective of the risk to his patients, his refusal to put himself forward for HIV testing... and above all his dishonesty when faced with the allegation that he had a sexual relationship with Mrs A."

The doctor was ethically obliged to take a test as soon as he knew there was a risk, she said. Instead, he denied the affair and worked until he had a positive test in January this year. Almost 2,000

women who were treated by Dr Ngosa have been sent letters telling them that they are at risk. "Many women could have been spared the ordeal that they have been suffering over the last few days," Miss Foster said.

Dr Ngosa, a father of three, admitted failing to take adequate steps to verify his HIV status but denied that this amounted to serious professional misconduct.

Miss Foster said that he had a duty to put his patients first, but he viewed the authority's efforts as an intrusion. He "embarked on a course of

him she was HIV positive. He was in the course of sitting medical examinations and told his representatives later: "I wanted to avoid caving in, losing everything, my family, my job, I was scared."

He was now under a deferred death sentence, Miss Davies said, but had confessed the affair to his wife. "Her reaction was that, in reality, he was already dying."

A graduate in human biology, Dr Ngosa had been sponsored to come to Britain to qualify. He had a widowed mother and two brothers in Zambia and sent home £200 a month. "It was not deliberately dishonest. It was an inability to accept what had occurred. It was fear, pure and simple, which prompted this man's actions," Miss Davies said.

She added that Dr Ngosa had always worn double rubber gloves when working and knew the risk of passing on his infection was low.

Striking off Dr Ngosa immediately, Sir Herbert Duthie, the committee chairman, said the doctor had a duty to be tested and to seek and follow professional advice.

"Dr Ngosa failed to put the safety of his patients foremost. When confronted with the information which suggested he had been at risk of HIV infection, Dr Ngosa seriously and persistently misled this council and others. His behaviour was a betrayal of his patients' trust and undermined the trust placed by the public in the profession. Such behaviour cannot be tolerated."

Dr Ngosa has 28 days in which to appeal.

A spokesman for the North Thames Region of the NHS said he was "pretty confident that we know all the hospitals where he treated patients". By yesterday more than 7,000 people had called helplines set up after it was disclosed on Friday that the doctor was HIV positive.



Ngosa: believed to have fled back to Zambia



Simon Beavis says that stress caused him to stop work at a seafood restaurant

Vegetarian chef loses benefit for refusing to cook meat

By DANIEL MCGRODY

A VEGETARIAN whose social security payments were stopped when he refused to work in carnivorous kitchens is arguing that he has a moral right not to cook meat.

Simon Beavis, 25, who trained at some of London's finest restaurants, has the support of the Vegetarian Society in his appeal against the Benefits Agency. He made his decision to prepare only vegetarian dishes after he became ill with stress, which he blamed on working in a seafood restaurant where lobsters were boiled alive.

"It is not the noise, because I know that is caused by the

shell contracting — it is the look in their eyes as they go in the water," said Mr Beavis, a vegetarian since he was 12.

There is a clause in the jobseeker's allowance about conscientious objections and if I were Jewish I would not have to cook pork. But because I am a vegetarian I have no rights."

Mr Beavis, a single parent, says that he lost £400 in jobseeker's allowance and housing benefit payments last November after telling the jobcentre in Penzance, Cornwall, that he would not cook meat. He said officials told him he was restricting his chances of employment.

"I tried living without any

income for two weeks, but I am a lone parent and I had to back down or starve, so I said I would take any job even if I did have to cook meat. I complained about the ruling and an adjudication went against me. The next appeal is to an independent tribunal."

Samantha Calvert, of the Vegetarian Society, said: "We believe a vegetarian has the right to refuse a job that involves handling or cooking meat." Jim Ainsworth, editor of *The Good Food Guide*, said: "It is not unheard of for a chef not to touch meat or seafood, but if he wants to work as a mainstream chef then I can see it being a bit of a handicap."

Ex-football star was three times over limit

By PAUL WILKINSON

MALCOLM MACDONALD, the former England footballer who has admitted drinking three bottles of whisky a day, pleaded guilty yesterday to drink-driving.

MacDonald, known as Supermac to fans in the 1970s when he played centre-forward for Newcastle United, Arsenal and England, was more than three times over the legal limit when stopped by police. He told magistrates in Newcastle upon Tyne that he was now receiving treatment at a detoxification centre.

MacDonald's career ended at the age of 29 when osteoarthritis developed in both knees. In a newspaper interview last Sunday, he said he drank whisky to deaden the pain in his legs.

MacDonald, 47, represented himself in court. Shaking visibly, he said: "I am very sorry and ashamed to be here. I am guilty of having driven with excess alcohol in me and, immediately afterwards, realising I had a problem, I went to my GP."

Roger Liddle, for the prosecution, said MacDonald was stopped on February 12 in the Jesmond area of Newcastle. He was arrested and taken to a police station, where he gave two breath samples. The lower one recorded 108 micrograms of alcohol per 100ml of breath: the legal limit is 35mcg.

MacDonald, who still holds the record of the most goals scored in an England match — five against Cyprus in 1975 — told the court he had experienced bankruptcy and that his telephone line business in Milan, had been closed by the Italian Government.

Until he was charged with drink-driving, he appeared five nights a week on a phone-in football show on local radio. He said: "I am not that well off, I can assure you. I am having to start all over again." Magistrates adjourned the case for three weeks for reports. MacDonald was given an interim driving ban and was bailed unconditionally until April 1.

NEWS IN BRIEF

Driver is killed in fog pile-up

For the second time in 24 hours motorists were involved in a fatal multiple collision while driving too fast in fog. One man died and several were injured, one seriously, in a series of collisions on the dual-carriageway A19 near Crathorne, North Yorkshire, early yesterday. On Monday three people died and 62 were injured while speeding on the fog-bound M42 in the West Midlands.

Drinks all-clear

Radiation tests on samples from 11 drinks manufacturers have proved negative. It was feared that a tanker which supplied them with carbon dioxide might have been contaminated by a leak at a Scottish Nuclear plant.

Clegg attacked

Military police in Catterick, North Yorkshire, are investigating an attack by two fellow soldiers on Lance Corporal Lee Clegg, who was freed on licence after being jailed for life for the murder of a joy-rider in Northern Ireland.

McAliskey plea

The latest High Court application for bail by Roisin McAliskey, 25, who is wanted in Germany in connection with the bombing of a British army base and is seven months' pregnant, was adjourned until Friday.

Death riddle

An inquest into the death of a woman whose body was dug up in a garden in southeast London last week was told that police did not yet know how she was killed. Diana Goldsmith, 44, vanished from Sevenoaks, Kent, in 1995.

Golden oldies

The yachtsman Tony Bullimore, who is 58, and the Virgin Challenger balloonist Alex Ritchie, 52, will receive British Gold Hero medals from the Association of Retired and Persons Over 50 in London next week.

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Police racketeers breed allies for rebels in Kinshasa

SUCH is the state of President Mobutu's prestige these days that hungry Zaireans have planted cassava shrubs in the lawn of his marble palace in the suburb of Binza.

Across the street Zola, 23, punched the air and pledged allegiance to the ailing President's nemesis, "I am a volunteer for [Laurent] Kabila," he yelled, setting off a squabble among carpenter colleagues about who would prove to be the best fighter for Zaire's rebel leader.

Mr Kabila's guerrillas claim to have encircled Kisangani, 2,000 miles away across impenetrable forest, and to have infiltrated the city with commandos. No such professional infiltration is necessary in the capital, Kinshasa. Mr Mobutu's own armed forces have ensured through racketeering that the people they are supposed to protect would be in the rebel vanguard.

The local head of Mr Mobutu's gendarmes turned up at Zola's roadside workshop with a large lorry on Monday. Like all the other artisans producing 1970s-style leatherette suits, beds and wardrobes, Zola had refused to pay the local police protection money.

"They took as much as they could before we started stoning them," said Antoine. "Mobutu and his forces have denied us our rights for too long. We will fight him for making us strangers in our own land," he spat.

Just as Zaire's ruler for 31 years has abandoned his Kinshasa palace of crumbling white marble and mould, so his Government is rotting, leaving a power vacuum which has panicked France with fears that Mr Kabila and his allies in Rwanda and Uganda may take the whole of Zaire.



Mobutu's troops are unable to match brilliant guerrilla tactics and propaganda, Sam Kiley reports from Kinshasa

So far the rebels have captured almost a third of the country. Using a combination of brilliant guerrilla tactics and propaganda, the alliance has been able to sweep up vast tracts of land without a shot being fired. This week Mr Kabila gave all senior officers in Kisangani until tomorrow to join his movement or risk being considered "traitors".

Military sources in the capital estimated that Kisangani has about 3,000 government troops to defend 500,000 civil-

ians, because all other soldiers, including senior officers, have fled the city which controls the River Congo.

France has been pressing the United Nations Security Council to authorise foreign military intervention to protect 200,000 Rwandan Hutu refugees whom Paris claims are being slaughtered by the advancing rebels, or who are at risk of death by starvation after five months of trekking through the eastern forests.

The appeals have been ignored by most other members of the UN, who believe that

France's real interest is in stopping the rebel advance, and in securing a safe future for Mr Mobutu and his cronies, long-standing clients of the Elysée Palace.

But the Hutu refugees are in a desperate state. Hundreds have died of starvation on their long march, herded as human shields against attack by the Tutsi-dominated rebels by their own extremist leaders. Yesterday the UN's High Commissioner for Refugees said tens of thousands were arriving in Ubundu, 60 miles south of Kisangani, and that aid workers were overwhelmed by the refugees' need for food and clean water.

This attitude has done nothing to convince Paris that Mr Kabila should be included in any ceasefire talks. France has insisted that he is a puppet of Rwanda and Uganda and his rebellion is nothing less than an invasion of anglophones.

"If Kinshasa were to go crazy after Kisangani falls, it will be because Kabila could not get there in time to impose order," said a West European diplomat. "The blame could be placed on his absence from the capital, not on his presence in Zaire," he said, adding: "A new order may be dawning in Zaire, and the French should try to accommodate it."

□ **Town captured:** Zaire's Defence Ministry acknowledged that rebels had captured the southern town of Moba in the copper-rich province of Shaba. (Reuters)

Leading article, page 19

UN chief retreats over call for troops

FROM JAMES BONE IN NEW YORK

KOFI ANNAN, the United Nations Secretary-General, held talks about the crisis in eastern Zaire during his visit to London last month, but never mentioned the creation of a multinational intervention force.

The next day he travelled to Paris and, egged on by French officials, announced that he hoped UN members would consider sending troops into the Zairean jungle to help with the rescue of stranded refugees. Britain and the United States said that they were deeply sceptical about military intervention far inside Zaire.

Since his return to New York, Mr Annan has backed away from the more grandiose interpretations of his appeal for intervention and, in a Security Council briefing last Friday, spoke only of a "monitoring mechanism" to oversee a ceasefire — possibly by aircraft or even satellite.

However, President Chirac yesterday reiterated France's demand for "urgently needed humanitarian intervention" to save tens of thousands of refugees — most of them Rwandan Hutus still fleeing from rebels backed by the Rwandan Government.

Asked about plans for a multinational force yesterday, the chief UN spokesman said: "It's not up to the UN Secretary-General to authorise a force. He floated the idea. He tried to light a fire under a few governments. He did what he could. That does not, at the moment, look like the likely solution to the problem."

□ **Washington:** The United States last night rejected any immediate support for the proposed multinational force but said America would pursue a ceasefire in Zaire and encourage the delivery of humanitarian aid.



A statue of a woman with four children on her lap is displayed at a news conference in Cairo. Ali Hassan, the Government's chief Egyptologist, said the 3ft high carving ranked in quality with some of the best pieces in the Egyptian Museum.

Egyptians unveil ancient statue

seen in Cairo. Thought to have been crafted in a royal workshop at least 3,000 years ago, the statue was found last week by a man

digging foundations for a house in the Nile delta. Mr Hassan said he had ordered archaeologists to comb the area in case the statue is part of a cache, hidden for safe-keeping. Although it has a royal connection, the identity of the statue is not known.

Two fires at nuclear factory

Tokyo: Fire broke out after an explosion at a nuclear waste-handling plant last night, officials said. However, radiation levels in the area were normal and no evacuation was ordered. It was not known if the building was occupied, the state-run Power Reactor and Nuclear Fuel Development Corp said.

It was the second fire in ten hours at the low-level radioactive waste plant at Tokai village, 70 miles from Tokyo. The first exposed about ten workers to a tiny level of radiation. (AP/Reuters)

Harriman effects on sale

New York: Paintings, furniture and Churchiana belonging to the late Pamela Harriman are to be sold at auction in New York (Quentin Letts writes). Mrs Harriman, the US Ambassador to Paris who died after a stroke last month, was a celebrated socialite whose first husband was Randolph Churchill, son of Sir Winston.

Sultan fights sex claim

New York: The Sultan of Brunei and his brother, Prince Jefri, launched legal action against Shannon Markette, 26, a former Miss America, who claimed she was kidnapped at their Brunei palace and asked to perform sexual antics (Quentin Letts writes). The Sultan launched a breach of ethics and formal grievance complaint.

Chinese will revise history

Hong Kong: Tung Chee-hwa, the Chief Executive-designate of Hong Kong, said that the territory's history textbooks will be revised after the transfer of sovereignty in July (Jonathan Mirsky writes). The move came after a similar statement by Qian Qichen, China's Foreign Minister, was attacked by Chris Patten, the Governor.

French hands tied over time

Brussels: France was "over-ruled by its European partners when it attempted to win the right to stop moving its clocks forward to summer time, along with the other 14 states (Charles Bremner writes). Only Britain sided with France, saying Paris had every right to decide what to do with its clocks, from a sovereignty point of view.

Diver finds wreck of £2bn treasure ship

FROM AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE IN OSLO

A NORWEGIAN diver has found the wreck of a Spanish galleon which sank off Ecuador in 1654 and its treasure estimated to be worth between \$3.5 billion (£2.2 billion) and \$4 billion, the Norwegian press reported yesterday.

Anton Smith received confirmation from international experts on Monday that the wreck off Punta Camero is indeed *La Capitana Jesús María*, which left Peru for Panama in 1654 but sank soon after sailing. About 10 per cent of the valuables on board were rescued: the rest sank.

Mr Smith began searching for the ship three years ago, using old maps from 1654. The captain of the ship, who

survived, had identified the approximate site of the wreck.

Mr Smith had spent the last few weeks in Ecuador, waiting for the go-ahead from the authorities to start the final search. After three days of scanning the seabed with ultra-modern technology, he identified the wreck.

A group of Norwegian investors have formed a company, *La Capitana Invest Inc*, to raise the necessary money to have the wreck raised.

According to the Norwegian financial daily *Dagens Næringsliv*, 50 per cent of the treasure will go to Ecuador. Of the rest, *La Capitana Invest* is entitled to a finder's fee of about 29 per cent, it said.



Smith: used old maps in three-year search

Husain rebukes Netanyahu

FROM CHRISTOPHER WALKER IN JERUSALEM

THE Arab-Israeli crisis deepened yesterday after Yasser Arafat, the Palestinian leader, twice rejected telephone calls from Benjamin Netanyahu, and details emerged of a tense and unprecedented exchange of messages between King Husain of Jordan and the Israeli Prime Minister.

A senior Palestinian official said Mr Arafat had ordered a suspension of all top-level contacts with Israel and had called foreign diplomats to an emergency meeting in Gaza. His spokesman, Nabil Abourdenah, denied such an order had been given, but said there were no negotiations for the moment.

The crisis, accompanied by warnings of impending wide-

scale street violence, erupted after Israel's decision to start a settlement for 32,000 Jews in occupied Arab east Jerusalem, and to hand back to the Palestinians a further 9 per cent of the occupied West Bank instead of the 30 per cent demanded.

The verbal exchanges have been followed by daily clashes between Israeli troops and stone-throwers in the West Bank. Yesterday a 19-year-old Israeli soldier who was guarding a settlement near Hebron was gravely ill in hospital after being stabbed 20 times by two masked Arabs who stole his gun.

The collapse in Israeli-Arab relations was demonstrated in a hostile and

personal four-page letter sent to Mr Netanyahu by King Husain, a man usually known for his measured language and polite diplomatic manner. He was also the one Arab leader who stood by Mr Netanyahu after his surprise election defeat of Shimon Peres last May.

Sections of the Jordanian message appeared in yesterday's Hebrew press. Most were confirmed by angry Israeli officials, although David Bar-Ilan, Mr Netanyahu's chief spokesman, denied the main headline in *Maariv*, which quoted the King as telling the Israeli Prime Minister: "I have not a trace of trust in you."

Israel radio reported that

the letter was preceded by a tense telephone conversation between the two. According to the Tel Aviv paper *Yedioth Ahronot*, the King told Mr Netanyahu: "Should you not cancel the decision to build on Har Homa, it will bring about an explosion in the peace process."

The King, who personally warned Mr Netanyahu of the dangers of proceeding with Har Homa only two weeks ago in Amman, said in the letter that the Israeli leader had repeatedly confused him in policies he has taken vis-à-vis the Palestinians. "This is the most difficult period between Israel and Jordan," the monarch, who made peace with Israel in 1994, added.

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Clinton and FBI clash over Chinese role in campaign funds

FROM TOM RHODES IN WASHINGTON

A RARE and potentially damaging rift emerged within the Administration yesterday after President Clinton clashed publicly with the FBI over Chinese involvement in domestic American politics.

Bringing further embarrassment to the White House, the discord came as the current fundraising controversy brought the biggest dent to the President's popularity in almost two years, his approval

ratings dipping by five points to 55 per cent in the latest Washington Post/ABC poll.

The FBI disputed a White House version of why President Clinton was not informed of intelligence reports that Beijing had attempted to influence the outcome of last year's American election with substantial campaign contributions.

Mr Clinton said that FBI agents who had briefed two aides in the National Security Council had issued strict instructions that the information be withheld from the

President and his closest advisers. "For whatever reasons, they were asked that they not share the briefing, and they honoured the request," he said.

Mr Clinton has consistently cast himself as an aggrieved party in the scandal but the FBI said no restrictions were set on the "dissemination up the chain of command" and implied that everyone at the National Security Council was aware of the warning.

The White House repeatedly asserted yesterday that the FBI had

made an error in its statement, merely compounding a widening division between the President and his Justice Department amid increasing Republican calls for an independent prosecutor to investigate the various strands of the inquiry. At issue is whether hundreds of coffee mornings at the White House, the use of the Lincoln Bedroom, rides on Air Force One and other fundraising gambits employed by the Clintons violated election laws about soliciting funds on federal property.

The FBI spat with the White House has helped to raise further questions about Beijing's influence. And it immediately complicated yesterday's congressional hearings into the confirmation of Anthony Lake as CIA Director.

During six days of hearings, Republicans on the Senate intelligence committee have promised a detailed examination of whether he had any role in the flow of Asian contributions to the Clinton-Gore campaign at a time when he was National Security Adviser.

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Mobs plunder at will as south Albania slips into lawless twilight

SCHOOL is out in Gjirokastra. Primary school pupils have joined the southern Albanian town's students in abandoning studies for guns and grenades, swelling the ranks of the gun-toting mob controlling the region.

The university principal, Viktor Terpo, wanders through the edge of the campus with an expression of baffled disappointment creasing the lines of his face. A couple of grenades explode behind him, thrown by his former charges, and he jumps with surprise. Other students are looting a lorry, breaking from their task to try to machinegun a passing piglet, hooting and jeering as the little animal disappears in a cloud of dust.

"This is not good for me, them or Albania," Mr Terpo mutters.



Anthony Loyd sees a Sarande hotel go up in flames as the rebels' euphoria over their "victory" vanishes and the revolution turns in on itself

"There is no authority here at all. My country is ruining itself. I no longer know if it is safe to stay. I want to wait for any students to come back, but as you see it might be a long wait." The principal's words were understated. Southern Albania is slipping into a lawless twilight of anarchy and destruction as newly armed rebel gangs turn from politics to plunder. The situation is veering out of control and, in the absence of a cohesive

authoritarian structure to deal with Tirana or the gangs, there seems no hope of a political solution to the crisis. The insurgents' brief euphoria at "victory" has all but evaporated, and their revolution has already begun to turn on itself: the honeymoon is most definitely over.

Improvised committees appear hopelessly unable to quell the rising level of crime or to find a leader to negotiate with President

Berisha in Tirana. The commanders of Sarande and Gjirokastra met yesterday to try to find a common policy on civil, military and political matters. The scene at the town hall in Gjirokastra where they met would have made a good farce, but for the gravity of the situation. General Agim Gozhita, committee commander of Gjirokastra, locked himself out of his office and, having failed to force the door, fell into a fury and had to be restrained from striking a deputy. Colonel Kocin of Sarande walked off in disgust, only to be coaxed back, looking unsettled, by a pair of gunmen. The man with most authority seemed to be the petrol-pump attendant who had acquired three tanks and an armoured personnel carrier — all

parked, complete with crews, on the forecourt.

It is gun law in a land with no other currency. Banks are closed or looted; phone lines cut; radio and television jammed; electricity and water supplies failing; the lights are truly going out in Albania.

"I don't know much longer we can carry on working," said Aleks Risti, deputy director of Gjirokastra's hospital. "Our medical stocks are seriously low, and we are desperately short of oxygen, serum and stitching equipment. Electricity is sporadic and today we are without running water. Until three days ago we had no gunshot casualties; in the past two days we had 25 victims of stray bullets or vendettas. Someone

from outside had got to stop this — the place is going to the dogs."

Gypsy children hold the Albanian border post with Greece at Kakavia. They scurried about in the dust wearing police caps, playing darts with customs forms. The army and police fled two days ago. The children are sometimes joined by masked gunmen who yesterday shot an Albanian man for no apparent reason. Down the road a teenager's stolen car runs out of fuel. He has had a gun for two days and wants to put it to use, so he stands in the road and holds up the next car to come, empties it of fuel, and leaves.

Elsewhere the atmosphere of impending disaster is heavier. As I write, Sarande's largest hotel is disappearing in smoke and flames

before me. Around it gunmen pour automatic fire into the sky, whooping with delight while scores of civilians scurry in and out of the state-owned building, choking with the smoke, to loot whatever they can.

"The gangsters and criminals are taking over," says Professor Ilirjan Alitaj, wringing his hands. He is a member of the Sarande committee charged with trying to maintain civil order in the port. He is not exactly sure how many other people are on the committee, who they are, or what its policy is.

"This is the worst thing we feared," he says as another sheet of flame erupts from the hotel foyer. "The total breakdown of law, and the rule of the mobsters. This is becoming madness."

Berisha loyalists raise spectre of North-South war

FROM TOM WALKER IN TIRANA

RESIDENTS in the home town of President Berisha yesterday broke into two local military stores and swore to defend the President, the first sign that fighting could break out across Albania's North-South divide.

With unrest and anarchy again spreading in the South, several foreign embassies, including Britain's, advised their citizens to leave the country. Italian diplomatic sources suggest that Tirana itself could be on the verge of rebellion.

Hotels in the capital began demanding immediate payment for rooms, and Lufthansa said it would give "all necessary help" to foreigners wishing to leave.

Trope, the birthplace of the President, is in the remote mountainous terrain bordering Kosovo in northeast Albania. Contacted by telephone, residents said they had broken into the weapons store at the nearby town of Bajram Curri and taken weapons. "There are 9,000 of us and we are ready to come to the side of our President," one leader said.

The telephone operator confirmed that there had also been an explosion at Bajram Curri, with one person injured. Elsewhere there were reports that looting had been

attempting to take arms stolen from near the southern coastal town of Fier to the North.

Last night President Berisha appointed Bashkim Fino, a former Mayor of Gjirokastra and a member of the main opposition Socialist Party, as Prime Minister. He replaces Aleksandr Meksi, a member of the ruling Democratic Party, who resigned last month.

Genç Pollo, a presidential adviser, said Mr Berisha would step down if the Socialist Party won an election, but party sources said the offer had failed to unlock the talks.

Security sources suspect that paramilitary groups loyal to the President are being recruited and armed in the capital.

Yesterday Albania experienced a new rash of spontaneous rebellions, usually involving the looting of arms

depots. The most serious was in the third largest city, Elbasan, 35 miles southeast of Tirana. Albania's rebellion is fuelled as much by satellite dishes as economic hardship. "If we see on the television that people are taking guns, then what the heck, why don't we?" said a retired doctor in the northern town of Shkoder.

The day's events were coloured by the usual mixture of the bizarre and the lunatic. A 26-year-old former Brindisi waiter named "Adriatik" announced that he was in charge of Albania's most important military airfield at Kucove, where 19 Chinese-built MiGs and their pilots are now in rebel hands.

"We are not bandits, we are the people," said the portly new commander, bedecked with twin bandoliers, two Kalashnikovs and a blue and white bobble hat. Pilots at the base said they had been ordered to fire at the insurgents but had decided to side with them instead.

Outside Kucove's smashed gates, foreign journalists were treated to the usual swash-buckling display of firepower, with hooligans emptying magazines of ammunition into any surviving street lights. A straggle of looters, their don-

keys laden with runway lights and other transportable military paraphernalia, lined the nearby road to Fier.

Few men in the area are without a gun of some description, and security sources in Tirana fear that Sunday night's raid on the arms factory at Polican near Berat may have yielded 40,000 weapons. A tour of the north-

ern "front line" is now easily achieved in half a day's drive from Tirana, where the continued political wranglings between the President and his Socialist opponents continue in the face of widespread turmoil.

Rebel-held territory at present peters out somewhere between Kucove and Lushnje amid the coastal plains south

of the capital. Lushnje, scene of some of the first pyramid riots, was tense yesterday, with the Shik secret police in particularly nasty form at roadblocks. They were seen dragging drivers by their hair from vehicles and cocking guns in their faces.

Adding to the political confusion, the so-called rebel leaders from Vlore, who took part

in negotiations on an Italian warship on Monday, denied they had reached any agreement. The one woman in the delegation, Luiza Hoxha, also ended speculation that she is the daughter of Enver Hoxha, the former dictator.

The rebel leaders insisted that, like their colleagues elsewhere, they would not relinquish their arms, until the



A gunman guards MiG fighters captured at the Albanian Air Force base at Kucove yesterday. A former waiter claimed to be in charge of the base

President and his Government had resigned.

Perikliti Teta, the former Defence Minister and Democratic Alliance member, admitted the Vlore talks had been flawed: "We political parties are making blah-blah, but we are not representative. The place for negotiations is here in Tirana, not on the sea with Italians."

Italy brokers deal with Vlore rebel leaders

FROM RICHARD OWEN IN ROME

ITALY yesterday claimed a diplomatic breakthrough after brokering an agreement by rebel leaders in the port of Vlore under which they would ask armed residents to hand in their weapons and begin to "restore normal administration".

Lamberto Dini, the Italian Foreign Minister, made a lightning visit to Tirana to inform President Berisha of the deal, hammered out on an Italian warship in the Adriatic. But the agreement appeared confined to Vlore — the focus of illegal immigration and drug smuggling to Italy — and most rebels in the South appeared determined to com-

plete their revolution by sweeping Mr Berisha from power.

Signor Dini said: "We are the guarantors of peace. We have worked hard with the EU and the international community to find a way out of this crisis. We hope we have made a start towards reconciliation by helping to achieve a national unity government in

Tirana". The Italians claimed that Vlore rebel leaders had agreed to "put an end to the uprising" in return for implementation of the compromise, proposed by Mr Berisha at the weekend, involving an amnesty for the rebels, a broad coalition between Mr Berisha's Democratic Party and the Opposition, and elections by June.

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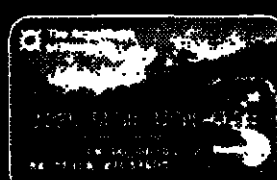
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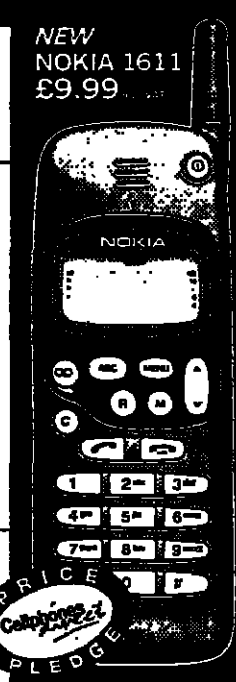
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Nato's eastward expansion could cost British taxpayers £2 billion

By MICHAEL EVANS
DEFENCE CORRESPONDENT

NATO enlargement could cost British taxpayers more than £2 billion in the next 13 years, according to a new assessment based on American Defence Department figures released last month.

The estimate of Britain's contribution, published yesterday by a research organisation, the British American Security Information Council, is based on the country's

present share of the existing Nato budget. If Britain's share is as high as £2 billion, or about £200 million a year for 13 years, it would be more than the Pentagon's estimate of American costs. However, Nato officials said the final share of costs to be met by each member of the alliance and new member states had yet to be worked out.

In a document published at the end of last month, the Pentagon estimated that the cost of Nato enlargement would be between

\$27 billion and \$35 billion (£18 billion to £23 billion) from 1997 to 2009. A third of this would be met by the new members — which are likely to be Poland, the Czech Republic and Hungary — and the Pentagon said the American contribution would be a net commitment of between \$1.5 billion and \$2 billion over 13 years, the equivalent of between £100 million to £133 million a year.

The full costs to the alliance will be revealed to Nato's North Atlantic

Council in May, after a detailed study by Nato officials. Apart from the contribution towards expanding Nato membership, there will be an additional "civilian" bill for expanding Nato's headquarters outside Brussels. The plan is to double the staff from 3,000 to 6,000, construct buildings to house the new members' representatives, and to provide more office space for the 27 members of the Partnership for Peace programme.

Herbert van Forest, the assistant

secretary-general in charge of resources, who is drawing up a blueprint for the enlargement programme, said yesterday that he hoped to have a cost framework that "would not ruin Nato". He said that apart from the Pentagon's document, costings studies had been made available to him from Britain, Poland, and the Rand Corporation. Poland has told Nato it has put aside £1 billion for its contribution to joining the alliance. Yevgeni Primakov, the

Russian Foreign Minister, also produced his own estimate for Nato expansion — \$70 billion (£46.6 billion). Mr van Forest said he did not know how Mr Primakov had reached this figure. Mr van Forest has to produce his costings blueprint by May 12. The Nato summit in Madrid, which will formally announce which countries are to be invited to join the alliance, is on July 8 and 9. Nato officials believe the Pentagon's estimate is excessive. Britain

and other European countries hope that some of the costs will be met by savings elsewhere, including pruning the 65 Nato headquarters down to about 20.

One Nato source said it seemed inconceivable that Britain would pay double the American share. According to the Pentagon estimate, the new members would have to pay for their own modernisation and restructuring.

Igor Rodionov, page 18

Yeltsin wields axe to clear ground for new Cabinet

FROM ROBIN LODGE IN MOSCOW

PRESIDENT YELTSIN dismissed almost his entire Government yesterday, leaving only Viktor Chernomyrdin, the Prime Minister, and his newly appointed first deputy, Anatoli Chubais, to draw up a new list of ministers for a restructured Cabinet.

The move follows a pledge by Mr Yeltsin last week in his state of the nation address to both houses of parliament to bring new and energetic people into the Government, which he said had failed to meet the needs of the people.

A presidential decree called on Mr Chernomyrdin to submit his candidates for office to the President in one week's time, as well as his recommendations for reorganising or closing down ministries and other government institutions, which number more than 50.

By keeping Mr Chernomyrdin in office, Mr Yeltsin has circumvented the need for parliamentary approval of his reshuffle. Only the appointment of the Prime Minister requires the endorsement of the Communist-dominated State Duma, which has no say in other ministerial changes.

By giving Mr Chubais direct control over the economy, however, the President has undermined the position of Mr Chernomyrdin, who in recent months has been seen to take a more conciliatory position towards opposition leaders. The fact that Mr Chubais remains his nominal subordinate deprives the Duma of the chance to block his appointment. The influ-

tial Mr Chubais, 41, who before his appointment last Friday as First Deputy Prime Minister for the Economy had been Mr Yeltsin's closest aide since masterminding his re-election campaign last year, is certain to play a main part in drawing up the new administration.

A dedicated market reformer, whose radical privatisation policies in the early 1990s outraged Communist opponents and a large, disaffected sector of the population, Mr Chubais is expected to choose a team much more closely in tune with his ideas.

There have been reports that Mr Chubais's erstwhile boss, Yegor Gaidar, former acting Prime Minister and leader of the Russia's Choice reformist movement, will be asked to join the Government. Mr Gaidar said last Sunday that he had received no such



Chernomyrdin given a week to name team

invitation and implied that he would not accept. Another prominent liberal, Grigori Yavlinsky, leader of the Yabloko faction in the Duma, said five members of his group had been offered government posts but had turned them down.

All ministers have been told to keep working until the new appointments are announced, and it appears likely that several will be reappointed. Anatoli Kulikov, the hardline Interior Minister, who was promoted recently to Deputy Prime Minister with special responsibility for fighting organised crime, is considered secure.

The same applies to Igor Rodionov, the Defence Minister, who is instituting long overdue military reforms. Yevgeni Primakov, the Foreign Minister who has headed Russia's campaign of opposition to Nato expansion, appears confident of remaining in office.

The biggest changes can be expected in the economic ministries. The most obvious head to roll is that of Aleksandr Lvshits, the Finance Minister, who is regarded as ineffectual. Commentators predicted the survival of Yevgeni Yasin, the Economics Minister.

Only one presidential appointment was announced yesterday, that of Valentin Yumashev, a Yeltsin aide, who has taken over Mr Chubais's duties as Mr Yeltsin's chief of staff.

Letters, page 19



German coalminers break through a police barricade near the parliament and chancellery in Bonn yesterday

Kohl rebuffs pit 'blackmail'

FROM ROGER BOYES IN BONN

RIOT police swinging batons yesterday struggled to head off angry German coalminers as they broke through cordons and tried to storm the offices of Helmut Kohl, the Chancellor.

"We want to work," chanted the miners as they elbowed their way into the no-go area around the parliament and chancellery. The brawny, tattooed pit workers, many wearing safety helmets to protect them from batons, were eventually thrust back.

More than 20,000 miners, furious at government plans to cut coal subsidies, have been laying siege to Bonn since Monday; buses from the Ruhr and the Saar regions are swelling the numbers of demonstrators, and the mood is turning ugly.

Herr Kohl yesterday refused to hold talks with a miners' delegation led by Hans Berger, the coal union chief, saying he would not negotiate in a "blackmail-like" atmosphere. The talks have been postponed until tomorrow, and Herr Berger — under pressure from his members to take a tougher line — will try to persuade the miners to lift the blockade of Germany's political capital. He seems unlikely to succeed. Germany's miners have rarely been so militant.

In Hamm, a critical rail junction in the Ruhr, 1,000 miners blocked the station. Several town halls in the industrial region were paralysed by sit-ins. The motorway leading to Luxembourg was blocked for the second day in succession.

"The mood in the Saar is explosive and could be hard to control," said a spokeswoman for the workers' council at Saar Mines. "I cannot rule out violent protests." Eighteen pits

nationwide have been at a standstill since the weekend.

But the main thrust of the protest was in Bonn. Miners on expensive motorcycles revved their engines throughout the day outside ministries, while other colliery workers banged drums and gongs to disrupt the sleepy town.

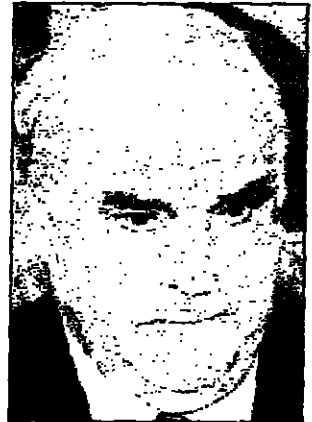
The miners have sensed that they are spokesmen for all the workers who have been suffering from tough public spending cuts and mass redundancies. Building workers were also on the march yesterday in Berlin; the record unemployment registered over the past few months has

hit the construction sector in particular.

In part, the pit closure programme is the result of the drive to meet the public-sector deficit targets of economic and monetary union. But the Government emphasises that reform of the coal subsidy scheme was long overdue.

Günter Rexrodt, the Economics Minister, says that because of the swollen coal subsidies each mining job now costs the Government £50,000 a year. "There is no escape from drastic reductions over the next few years," he said. More than 50,000 redundancies — out of a total mining workforce of 90,000 — are scheduled over the next seven years. The miners say that more than jobs are at stake: whole communities would die out and about 70,000 other people would also become unemployed.

No government politician dared yesterday to address the miners directly. Most of the pit workers had slept in the corridors of the Social Democratic headquarters. Some had smashed their way into the offices of the Free Democrats, seen as the main villains by the miners. As the junior partners of Herr Kohl, the party has always lobbied for an end to coal subsidies.



Kohl refused to meet workers' delegation

German budgetary cuts sap army's morale and supplies

By ROGER BOYES

BONN'S financial squeeze is undermining the morale of the German Army, which is having to use fireworks instead of munitions, according to a report issued yesterday by the Government's military ombudsman.

The report paints a grim picture: army vehicles are being cannibalised, signallers are being trained on radios that are more than 35 years old, non-commissioned officers have been stealing weapons from other units.

"On every visit to military bases — and I have been making two a week over the past year — there have been complaints about deficiencies and missing equipment," said Claire Marienfeld, who moni-

tors the morale of the army. Some companies had to share three compasses and two sets of binoculars; there was a chronic shortage of gas masks and more than half of the vehicles she examined were out of order.

Frau Marienfeld said the German Army was becoming a two-class force, with resources being funnelled into those units groomed for overseas missions while the bulk of the military at home was being neglected. "The army needs more money, and of course this is leading to a loss in motivation," she told reporters shortly after presenting her report to parliament.

One side-effect of the financial malaise is an increase in bullying. Her report says one soldier was told to kneel and

had a pistol loaded with blanks fired at his neck by a sergeant. On another occasion four masked soldiers whipped a colleague with knotted towels, beat him in the face and scorched his scalp with a burning spray can. The tone of training routines has also become harsher. One drill instructor trained his unit to answer the question "What makes grass grow?" with the shouted response: "Blood, blood, blood."

Frau Marienfeld said that on the one hand the German Army was being required for the first time in its postwar history to fight abroad, while on the other it had to bear the brunt of radical spending cuts to ease Germany's way towards European economic and monetary union.

policy, is part of a plan for bolstering the Union's foreign and security machinery in the revised Maastricht treaty. The plan accepts the consensus that the national veto must be retained for initiating common actions abroad, but it provides for governments to abstain from taking part.

Decisions on implementing agreed policy could be taken by majority voting. Britain objects to any extension of majority voting, although it accepts in principle the idea of "constructive abstention".

The Franco-German text also calls on the EU to appoint a foreign policy chief who would report directly to the EU's summit council. Most other states are happy with a plan to keep the job at a lower level in the shape of the secretary-general of the Council of Ministers, the EU's law-making body. The Commission is fiercely resisting the French-inspired plan for a EU foreign policy chief, who would rival its own President as the Union's face abroad.

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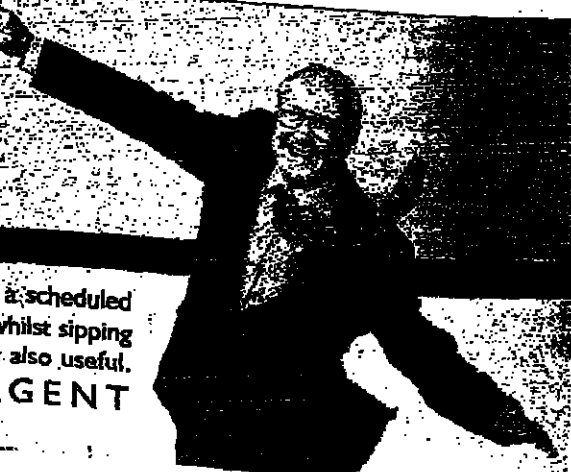
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Continuing our series on primary education: the dilemma of the middle-class parent, and how two families made their choice



Stop all this class politics

No issue punctures the smooth civility of a middle-class dinner party more than education. The Working Mother (iniquities or victimisation of) you'd have thought would be more inflammatory, but for the most part either self-hugging smugness or defensive bullishness ensure that the real debate is carried on between couples by themselves in the car on the way home.

To be sure, they will utter platitudes, but few of the guests will risk speaking their mind over the dinner table. Besides, however much the subject might seem to divide opinion, there is, lurking underneath it, one great unifier: the Nanny Factor. In the rush to compare stories, moan, do all the things that middle-class parents do together, petty differences of mere ideology are quickly forgotten.

But say that you want your child to go to the local state primary, and it splits the table immediately. The argument that automatically ensues is such an English one somehow: this is the characteristically implicit who-do-you-think-you-are? line of attack.

Those whose children go to a fee-paying school presume that if you don't want to join them it must be because you are so keen on being right-on, and that — it follows — you are full of warm self-congratulations for being a wonderful, nice, good person. In other words, a sanctimonious, smug and downright irksome *bien-pensant*.

It would be dishonest to pretend I didn't share some of those suspicions and some of that irritation — or at least some of the time. There are plenty of people who do want, boringly and self-deludingly, to demonstrate their bona fides all the time, and to as big and as dissenting an audience as possible — which is why a dinner party full of anxiously ambitious middle-class professionals is such fertile ground for them.

I am always tempted to say that I couldn't give a damn about the ideology, I just want to be able to spend money on designer clothes for myself, rather than school fees for the children. That's not quite true, but it would be a great way of shutting them up.

I don't know that my wish for my children to go to the local primary is what I'd call ideologically motivated, though. I believe that there should be a good state system of education, and I don't see how

we — as parents, rather than teachers or legislators — can help to bring this about, if all of us — the glibly, pushy, anxious and achievement-obsessed middle classes — are sending our children elsewhere.

I'm not saying that academic excellence is the province solely of the professional classes; that would be nonsense. But I hate the idea that we now have a two-tier education system, and really don't want to be responsible for its divisive survival. But naturally, if it's a question of doing my best by my child, or my best by the state, there's no choice. Or rather, if I could afford it, there would be the choice. That's the point.

I hope I wouldn't then hang on about how bad I felt: there are a great many people out there who wish they had the money to experience that middle-class dilemma and liberal angst for themselves.

And it's not just that the vocal, educationally eager contingent are in some number, absent from state schools, but that while they are paying so much money to get their children the education they want for them, they have a vested interest in the inferiority of "free" education. It sounds shocking put that way, but it's true.

When people say to me, as they often do, and in the most impudently disapproving tones, that they hope I wouldn't put my politics before my child, I am infuriated. Of course I wouldn't. But more: why should it be put like that? I don't want to send my children to state school because I think it would be good for them to receive a second-class education, I want to send them there to receive a good education.

If such an education looks possible, then somehow it infuriates people more. When, in defence of my rather wobbly position, if position it is, I say that we live near a very good primary, then it makes people crosser. As if that means I'm speaking from an unfair advantage.

But I do see that if you were spending £700 or £1,000 a term, or what ever it is, to get the best for your child (and I don't disagree with your right, or mine, to do

so), then the worse the state schools are, by comparison, the better you'll think your money spent. And maybe you would mind someone else's child's getting just as good an education for free. It would seem so unfair, somehow.

And it's only natural that one would start thinking like that, for I presume the financial struggle to cover the costs of a private education must be huge and burdensome. Perhaps it is selfish not to want to join the frontline on that one, but I don't. It's not as if I ironically suggested that I just want clothes and expensive holidays instead. But I don't want to have to work all the time, never seeing the children, to scrape together the school fees. I would resent that tremendously, on my behalf as well as theirs, and only hope it won't be necessary. (And I sometimes wonder whether it follows, too, that parents who make huge sacrifices to stump up the school fees can't help but put so much pressure on their children to achieve, to excel.)

The disparity between standards in fee-paying and state schools is not an absolute, I recognise. A good state school can be very much better than a good independent school. (And anyway, it is at secondary level rather than primary that the difficulties are most pronounced.) But if you live in London, or any of the inner cities, the situation is certainly polarised.

My daughter goes to a state nursery (though put like that it does rather sound like a Soviet compound) and I'm pleased. Had there not been a good nursery school near by, or had she not got a place, I would have sent her to a private one. And, indeed, she used to do a couple of afternoons a week at a local Montessori at £13 a session.

What I'll do in two years' time when she is primary school age, or in four and half years, when my son is five, I don't know. But I hope I'll be able to give them what every child deserves: a good education, and not at my expense or, indeed, at the expense of less privileged children.

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Tomorrow: Choosing a prep school



Nigella Lawson



Francis Cade on his way to St Mary's — it is up-and-coming, but not elitist, his father says

The battle of the Saints

THE CADES and the Mathews live close to each other in Putney, southwest London. Between their houses there are three primary schools: Hotham, St Mary's and All Saints. In the past year both families set out to choose a primary school for their children. Hotham was ruled out as being too big and too rough, which left the two church schools.

"Francis was going to school aged only just four, so we were especially worried about his security," says Andy Cade. "All Saints had a very impressive reputation, but had lost its defining head teacher. St Mary's was the up and coming school, with a dynamic head, and we felt it was less high-powered and elitist."

St Mary's was also slightly nearer, which meant it was where more of the Cades' close neighbours sent their children, most of whom testified to its good reputation. When they visited the school they found that there was a whole range of parent support activities. "We wanted to be part of the community and St Mary's gave us that opportunity," says Mr Cade.

THE Mathews also visited the two favoured schools. Philie Mathews says: "Many of our neighbours had sent their children to All Saints; we had also heard that many of the children went from there into the private system, which was an option we wanted to keep open. All Saints was our nearest school; at the mothers and toddlers groups we heard only positive stories and when we went round we noticed what a happy school it was."

When choosing a primary school, useful guidelines are: talk to parents with children attending; look at the schools the children go to next; visit the school; any gut-feeling about the head teacher should be checked out; go to a parents' event (jumble sale, Christmas bazaar, concert).

HUGH THOMPSON

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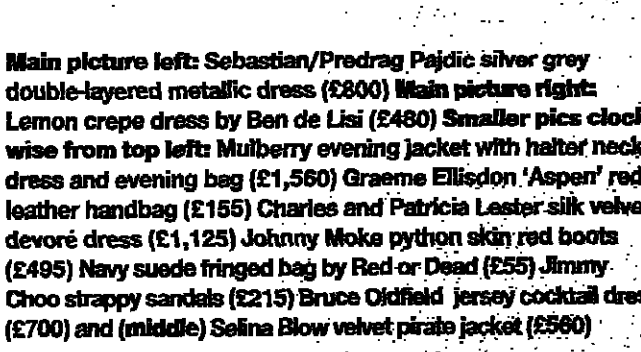
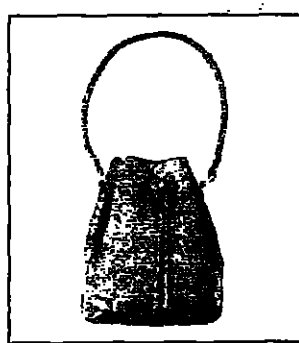
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Main picture left: Sebastian/Predrag Pajdic silver grey double-layered metallic dress (£800) Main picture right: Lemon crepe dress by Ben de Lisi (£480) Smaller pics clockwise from top left: Mulberry evening jacket with halter neck dress and evening bag (£1,560) Gaerne Elledon 'Aspen' red leather handbag (£155) Charles and Patricia Lester silk velvet devoré dress (£1,125) Johnny Moke python skin red boots (£495) Navy suede fringed bag by Red or Dead (£255) Jimmy Choo strappy sandals (£215) Bruce Oldfield jersey cocktail dress (£700) and (middle) Selina Blow velvet pirate jacket (£560)

CHANGING TIMES



JANE SHILLING GETS DRESSED

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Ink blue dress, £439 Maria Grachvogel, 0171-581 8180



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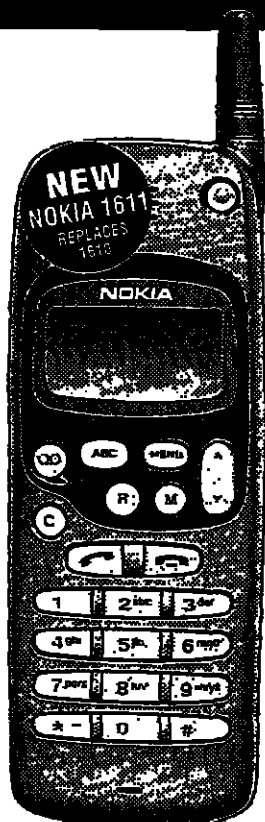
Photographer: JULIAN MARSHALL; Stylist: FAYE SAWYER; Make-up: HELEN BANNON; Hair: PAUL MATTHEW at Paul Matthew



Nude sheer dress, £120 by Plein Sud, available at Whistles

Photographer: JULIAN MARSHALL; Stylist: FAYE SAWYER; Make-up: HELEN BANNON; Hair: PAUL MATTHEW at Paul Matthew

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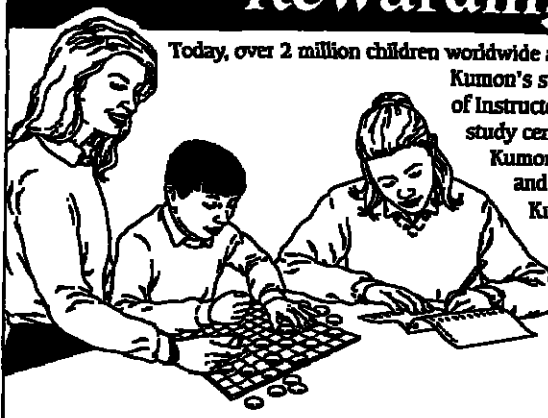
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TODAY IN MEDIA



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Page 23***

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WHAT ELSE?

١٥٨ من المجلد

The children nobody wants — India's doomed baby girls and the slum victims of Brazil



A firstborn girl from the village of Usilampatti. Among the rural poor of Madurai district, second daughters are unlikely to be allowed to live

The baby killers

I feel as if you've been turned inside out. You've just given birth and finally you feel empty. You're exhausted. Your breasts are painfully full of milk. And then you look at your baby. And you see that she's a little girl. And you know that you have to kill her.

Vaira Mani drops her head in sadness as she recounts the death of a neighbour's newborn baby. It is as if the child had been hers, for she speaks with a conviction that seems to come from personal experience. She knows that I know, and this, unacknowledged and unspoken, creates a special bond between us.

We are in the village of Usilampatti, about 40 miles west of the holy city of Madurai in the south Indian state of Tamil Nadu. Usilampatti has gained notoriety as the centre of the so-called "killing fields of Madurai", one of many regions where the ancient custom of female infanticide is still widespread.

According to some studies, more than 16 million baby

Celia de Lamo reports from a village in India where newborn girls are killed to stop them being a financial burden on their families

girls a year in India are killed by their mothers or by village midwives called *dayans*.

Usilampatti is a place of great beauty. It is surrounded by paddy fields, dotted with tall, elegant palm trees and framed by distant blue mountains. Only the earth, rich and blood-coloured, suggests the deadly annual harvest. For it is here that the children are buried.

I arrived in the village early one morning. Children were getting ready for school and their mothers were busy with household chores. We were greeted with polite curiosity. Most of the men were out at work.

I met Vaira later that morning when I ventured into the paddy fields. That afternoon, after a simple lunch of rice and lentils, we talked and became friends. Vaira is 35, one of seven daughters born to agricultural labourers, and the

mother of two children; a boy aged 12 and a girl aged six.

Female infanticide in India does not affect the upper classes, who have enough wealth to provide for their children. The middle classes, likewise, can afford access to modern technology to establish the sex of a foetus and the subsequent cost of an abortion if one is wanted. But among the poor, especially in backward rural areas of states such as Tamil Nadu and Bihar, female infanticide is still commonplace.

The practice is excused and condoned on many grounds. Girls are seen as nothing more than a drain on a family's resources. The first daughter is allowed to live because soon she will assume household chores. But the chance of life for a second or third female child diminishes drastically.

A woman's life is dominated by rituals which involve the distribution of money and gifts. A family's honour rests on its ability to conduct ceremonies appropriately, including, of course, the dowry and wedding. In Tamil Nadu, a prospective groom with a secure government job commands a dowry of up to 25,000 Rupees (£500) and 100 grams of gold, as well as household goods and, perhaps, a vehicle. These gifts do not guarantee a successful marriage — but without them there would be no marriage at all.

Holding my arm tight and with tears in her eyes, Vaira told me of the different ways in which girl children are murdered in the village. Some babies are buried alive or interred in pots where it takes up to two hours for them to suffocate. Others have their mouths stuffed with wet cloths

or are slammed against walls. Or an infant may be fed the poisonous sap of a local plant which destroys the internal organs, causing convulsions and internal haemorrhaging.

But perhaps the most horrific method is "dry drowning", whereby the open mouth of a baby girl, searching for her mother's nipple, receives instead a handful of grain which chokes the child to death.

Recent government programmes to safeguard baby girls in Tamil Nadu have failed. Cradles where unwanted children could be deposited were installed in public spaces, and the authorities said that rescued children would be placed in orphanages. But this was not enough to change the attitudes of village women, who said they would rather kill a female child than create an orphan with no caste and identity, who they feared could one day dishonour the family or return to seek vengeance.

This custom, created and perpetuated by men for their own benefit and supremacy, makes their wives and mothers killers.

According to the United Nations, there are an average of 105 women to every 100 men in most countries of the world. But this pattern, tellingly, does not hold in four countries where female infanticide is still practised: India, where there are 93 women to every 100 men; Bangladesh and Afghanistan, where the ratio is 94 to 100; and China, where there are only 88 women to every 100 men.

I left the village of Usilampatti, and later India, heavy in the knowledge that

'Poverty drives girls to sell their bodies'

I have seen the slums of Brazil. They are sad, frightening places: rubbish heaps of life where families nest like rats in shacks of cardboard and plastic, where adolescents brawl with blades and listless toddlers sit and stare. Yet the slums are vibrant places, too. The clash of lives strikes brilliant sparks.

Too few people see the bright flare before it burns out and dies. Street children are killed as casually as vermin in Brazil.

Adriana — now 17 years old — was brought up in a slum in Recife, the ninth in a family of ten children, though only six of them still survive. A slum makes a brutally indifferent step-parent. Adriana herself is blind in one eye and has only quarter-vision in the other because of tuberculosis.

Her mother was always ill. Her father was a drunkard who spent his wages on the drink which flooded his head with impossible rages.

When Adriana was only four he lashed out at her with a knife. The scar which still marks the bridge of her nose gives her a worried look, belying the adolescent enthusiasm with which she talks, wagging her finger, planting her hands on her hips, impatiently tossing her ringleted hair. She and her friend Monica, with whom she has travelled to England, are excited by everything they see. In the hushed lobby of a Mayfair hotel they move with too much energy to blend in with the other guests, they talk just a bit too loudly. A party of Japanese, belted neatly into Burberry raincoats, slide furtive glances as they pose for snapshots.

"I ran away from home when I was six," Adriana says. "My father beat my mother with a bottle and blood poured out. She was taken away to hospital and didn't come back. Well, you have to do what you can, so I left."

She found work with a fruit stall owner who, though he did not pay her, gave her enough to eat. But then, when she was ten, he began to make sexual advances to her. He assumed it was his right. When Adriana met an older man who promised to take her home and give her everything she wanted, she was quick to accept. "I got in his car and he drove to a motel. He said take your clothes off and I began to cry. So he ripped my clothes off and raped me. The motel owner found me crying in the room. She told me that I should have known what was going to happen, that that was what motels are used for."

Adriana became a child-prostitute. "The

money wasn't good. Girls would fight for the best territories. We thought we were lucky if we were picked up by a foreigner, even though they often wanted us to do far worse things than the Brazilian men."

By the time she was 11, Adriana had fallen in with a gang of young thieves. "I became a *maloqueira* (a 'mad-one')," she says. "We would hold people up with guns, we would steal whatever we could sell, we would sell our bodies. You had to be stone hard to survive. We were hunted by death squads. I saw my friends killed, but someone would be dying right in front of me, and all I could do was run off. One of my friends was found with her fingers cut off, her hair torn out and her breasts slashed. It had been done as a warning to us."

Then Adriana got pregnant — she was only 13. She didn't know who the father of the child was. "The most important thing to me is that I know who the mother is," she says. The child changed her life. She had heard before about the work of a Brazilian lawyer, Ana Vasconcelos, who had opened a day centre — the Casa de Passagem — to help the street girls of Recife.

There they could learn to read and write, to sew, cook and use computers. They could get medical attention and health advice. Once she had just laughed at the idea. "I didn't believe that anyone would help me. On the streets you are hated, you live the life of a crawling insect." But when she eventually made her way with her child to the house they welcomed her in by name. "I was amazed. No one had called me by my name for years."

Adriana is now part of the team working at the Casa. She helps other children still out on the streets and writes poetry in her spare time. It is not love poetry — "I never loved a man. I never felt secure with a man" — it is the harsh, untutored poetry of the slums. For Ana Vasconcelos, raising awareness of the plight of these children is of central importance. "Poverty drives these girls to sell their bodies," she says. "People must understand that they had no other option."

I ask Adriana what she most wants for her child. "I want her to have what I never had," she says, "someone to listen to her." It does not seem too much to ask.

RACHEL CAMPBELL-JOHNSTON

● The Casa de Passagem project is financially supported by Womankind Worldwide, Christian Aid and Child Hope.



Adriana (right) and her friend Monica

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Russians fear a new Cold War

General Igor Rodionov warns Nato against enlargement

Since the end of the so-called Cold War, exceptionally favourable conditions have emerged for jointly building a new world order, a new system of security based on three pillars: equality of peoples and states, mutually beneficial co-operation, and good neighbourliness.

However, the making of the new epoch has encountered serious resistance in the form of attempts to preserve at any cost one of the cornerstones of the old epoch — Nato — into the epoch of partnership. Frantic efforts have been undertaken to justify this, though it clearly runs counter to the logic of historical processes. The culmination of these efforts is Nato enlargement, a notion fed on Cold War stereotypes: the preservation of a slightly camouflaged military bloc by absorbing newly independent states which were recently members of the Warsaw Pact.

What is the sense of enrolling new members into Nato and moving its borders to the East? Are the consequences of such an expansion well thought out? Will such a new European watershed near Russia's borders serve the cause of security, and will it become a factor for stability?

We cannot allow the peoples of Eastern Europe to become hostages to a flawed decision presented as a *fait accompli*. The price might be unacceptably dear. A basis for a general and comprehensive security system could be the Organisation for Security and Co-operation in Europe. However, some Nato circles are resisting the strengthening of its role. And the reason is clear: if it were strengthened there would be no need for an enlarged Nato.

Implementing the decision to expand Nato means failing to create a unified security area, and going back to dividing lines across Europe. Whatever intricate political rhetoric is used to justify such an expansion, this will mean a return to the bloc mentality, which means instability and tension. A number of destabilising factors are evident. Here we have, first of all, a further altering of the balance of armaments and forces in favour of Nato. This will undermine the Treaty on Conventional Armed Forces in Europe.

Secondly, Nato's expansion eastwards would create a situation similar to the Cold War, when moving materials and troops closer to our borders brought them into direct opposition to Russian troops in the Kaliningrad Special Region.

Thirdly, substantial expansion of Nato's operational capabilities, as a result of its acquiring control of airfield networks, would hypothetically allow the bloc's aircraft to reach the Smolensk-Briansk-Kursk and Petrozavodsk-Yaroslavl-Belgorod lines. Tactical nuclear weaponry situated in Europe would thus become a strategic consideration. This means that the strategic arms limitation treaties, as well as further steps towards nuclear disarmament, would be in danger. Fourthly, with the hypothetical entry of the Baltic States into Nato, the bloc would gain strategically ad-

vantageous naval bases, while the activities of the Russian Baltic fleet would be substantially impeded.

The decision to enlarge Nato testifies to its double standards in its approach to security. Russia's purported threat is assessed on the basis of its military potential, yet Russia is supposed to accept at face value the declarations of a peace-loving Nato. This is unacceptable to us.

I believe that Nato can and must adapt to new geopolitical realities, by gradually evolving into an organisation streamlined towards averting and settling crises and conflicts, and collective peace-making under the mandates of the UN and the Organisation for Security and Co-operation in Europe. In other words, it can evolve into one of the most important components of a new all-European security structure.

Russia and Nato have accumulated a certain experience of practical co-operation in recent years, as for instance in safeguarding the peace accords on Bosnia and Herzegovina. A full-scale treaty between Russia and Nato could be supported by a system of accords with other European countries that are not members of the alliance.

Of course, we face certain obstacles on the road to developing that co-operation. None of these is insurmountable, and with enough goodwill they can be removed. But one point causes concern both in Russia and the West: the potential not only for mutual criticism but for mutual mistrust. This constitutes a retreat into the past.

The West recognises that its security is not threatened by Russia. Yet when I met Nato leaders in Bergen, I did not once hear from my opposite numbers a substantiated reply to the vital question of why preserving this military-political bloc and its expansion to the east is strategically necessary. Of course Nato countries are free to do what they wish in their own house, but when imminent changes threaten their neighbours' security, they cannot be easily dismissed.

History tells us that stability is achieved by the proper functioning of collective security, rather than bloc security. More than 180 years have passed since the Congress of Vienna, which divided Europe after the Napoleonic wars. One year later, the Holy Alliance united the victors. This, in effect, was the first attempt to create an all-European security system. Alas, this effort proved futile: artificial attempts to limit the role and influence of Russia in Europe doomed this progressive concept. It is common knowledge that all led to is it really true to say that history teaches us nothing except that it teaches us nothing? Surely stability, security and peace in Europe will not once again be sacrificed to political ambitions?

The author is Minister of Defence of the Russian Federation. This is an edited extract from an article in the April edition of *Parliamentary Review*.



Comet [from the Greek *komētēs*, long-haired] 1. A star-like nucleus surrounded with a misty light and consisting of gaseous matter. 2. A portent.

The Tories' finest hour

Only Britain is saving for its old age — so we must stay aloof from fiscal union

Britain once built railways that were the envy of the world. Iron horses thundered across continents, bearing Britannia's name to the corners of the globe. Next came the battle fleets of empire. A world made safe for trade was made safe for freedom. The oceans surged to the engine of the British industry. But what today? What glided Parthenon can we show our grandchildren and say with pride, "We did that, and it was good?"

Peter Lilley, the Social Security Secretary, has the answer. Britain's glory is the massed assets of the private pension funds. They may not stir the spirit. No monarch reviews them in line astern from Spithead to the North. They fly no Union Jack, play no anthem, win no cheers on the Wembley terraces or the beaches of Corfu. But to Mr Lilley the private pension funds are the stuff of legend: at £650 billion they are more than the rest of Europe's put together. Britannia is now a Scottish Widow. The White Cliffs of Dover are papered with Prudential bonus chits. In a world that measures wealth in financial services, Britain's genius is again pre-eminent. Our descendants will hear tell of the Nineties with tears in their eyes and say, "Those men were giants. They vetoed the euro, cloned a sheep and built the greatest private pension funds on earth."

The Tory Government is now on its final hallucinogenic trip. Each day a minister is found dribbling some new "policy" leaked from the forthcoming manifesto. The tactic is a mystery. The leak (if such it is) is duly trashed by the Opposition and undermined by another minister in a media gaffe. The strategy is more mysterious still. John Major and Kenneth Clarke plead that the economy is fine and Britain "feels good". This message is spread by retching from Michael Howard and Gillian Shepherd. Their Tory Britain is not Mr Clarke's. It is a nasty, sinful, uneducated place whose inhabitants are fit only for prisons, pillories and the swish of the birch. This "feel-good" faction is given all the best sound-bites. It is apparently beyond John Major's discipline.

Onto this slippery stage Mr Lilley stepped last week for his minute's limelight. He quietly announced the conquest of a political Everest. Not only were Britain's privately funded pensions the wonder of the world, but he wanted to make them even bigger and better. He wanted to privatise the basic state pension and wind up its

costly earnings-related sister, known as Serps. This would be the biggest act of privatisation in modern history, offloading onto the private capital market what could one day be a quarter of all public spending.

All developed countries view pensions with horror. Ever since the early 1980s, when Norman Fowler reviewed the subject for Margaret Thatcher (and was ignored), politicians and pundits have sensed "a demographic timebomb" under the pensions bill. Some bold individuals, such as Fowler's successor, John Moore, and Labour's Frank Field, have plunged into the darkness and recoiled aghast. Their story was the same. There would soon be too many old people demanding too high a pension for the ever-smaller working population to support. State pensions were a soaring debt on which repayment was getting ever closer. Taxes or borrowing would have to rise beyond what was tolerable, unless the debt was "funded" and invested from the contributions of working people — in other words privatised. But somehow the "explosion" was always in the future. Besides, the subject was cripplingly dull. Nobody cared.

Except in Britain. Perhaps British policymakers are less vulnerable to democratic pressure. Perhaps the Tories, so long in office, have grown more sensitive to the long term. Either way, ministers have systematically bribed pensions contributors to contract out of Serps and go private. They showered contributors with rebates and tax reliefs, while restricting the benefits of the state system. The private pensions sector, from Maxwell to the contracting-out advice scam, was lightly regulated. Everything short of privatisation was done to get potential Serps claimants off the books.

The policy has been successful. As Europe's pensions debt soared, Britons stayed in control. Three-quarters of Britons opted out of Serps into private schemes. Building a pension

has overtaken building a home as the obsession of the saving classes. While workers in France, Germany and Italy left their pensions in the hands of their governments and future taxpayers, Britons have done the opposite. The result has been astonishing. Britain's private pension assets have risen to an astronomical £650 billion, more than the rest of Europe's put together. In contrast, Germany's assets stand at £175 billion. France's at £33 billion and Italy's at just £5 billion, says the OECD.

The resulting difference in actuarial debt is equally dramatic. According to the International Monetary Fund, Germany's pensions debt is roughly 120 per cent of its gross domestic product. Italy's is 110 per cent and France's is 70 per cent. The IMF calculates that at the end of the decade these nations will face a gap between pensions contributions and payments of more than 3 per cent of GDP. This gap must be bridged. As Gabriel Stein points out in a *Polexia* pamphlet published this month, both the size of the debt and the extra borrowing to bridge it must shatter the Maastricht criteria for monetary union. (Criteria which appear more meaningless by the month.)

At present there is no explicit plan to merge the EU's tax and social security policies, though that must one day be implied by "full economic and monetary union". Given Britain's sound record and the huge mismatch between funded and unfunded pension debts, any harmonisation of pensions would either be grotesquely unfair to Britain or grotesquely expensive. Buying out the common agricultural policy would be petty cash in comparison.

Boring though it may be, pensions debt is not some connoisseur's side-show to the European monetary debate. The aggregates are huge. Pensions threaten to claw lumps out of Europe's wealth long into the new century. Only mass immigration

could conceivably supply the new working population to pay for it. On any basis, the effect on interest rates must be severe, and the case for Britain staying aloof overwhelming. As Tim Congdon said on this page recently, "If Europe's governments cannot solve the problem of unfunded pensions, they will not be able to prevent rises in taxation which will wreck their economies."

Mr Lilley's plan to get the State out of pensions over the next 40 years, other than as guarantor and regulator, would convert the pensions funds into vast financial powerhouses. The transitional cost would be high. New workers (now in their twenties) would receive rebates on their national insurance contributions to put into approved private schemes. This cost, added to that of continued payments to those now drawing or entitled to state pensions, will rise to £7 billion extra a year by 2030. But the gamble must be the ultimate privatisation challenge. It is that a private pension is more efficiently administered, more secure and less liable to erosion or confiscation than a state pension. Belief in this must be the true test of the modern capitalist.

How ironic that the most radical reform standing to the credit of the Tory Government should come in its dying weeks. Most public service privatisations will one day slither into a mess of political interference, sub-contracts, bankruptcies and subsidies. But Mr Lilley's is in a class of its own. He is committing the nation's entire savings against old age to the private capital market. He is committing future governments to regulate this market fairly. He is also committing the Treasury to rising public spending on pensions for up to four decades before the full yield on the policy is secure.

I suppose the message is that governments can afford to take risks when they sense an appointment with death. But Mr Lilley has seen the revolutionary moment and grasped it. While colleagues scurried in the dust for crumbs to throw at voters, he has risen to the occasion. He has slammed on the table with full Cabinet authority a policy that is beyond the daring of any other government in Europe. It would cost present taxpayers dear in the short run, but be blessed by taxpayers to come. It is a classic of a policy with its ear to the ground of history. We should have dying governments more often.

Simon Jenkins

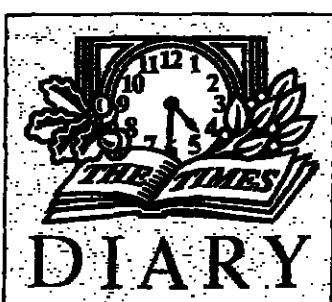
Street wise

IN THE Kremlin, as they discuss the latest round of ministerial changes, the name "Millfield" wafts round like the vapours from a bad vodka. Just as Eton was known in the Fifties as the "Cabinet-makers to the Queen", so the public school in Street, Somerset, has become the favourite of Russia's new democrats.

It is regarded as no coincidence that the biggest winner in Yeltsin's reshuffle has been Valentin Yumashev, whose daughter, like the President's grandson, attends the school. Yumashev, as the newly-appointed Chief of Staff, will be a powerful force. He and Yeltsin bonded when Yumashev ghosted the President's recent memoirs, *Against the Grain*.

Adding to the general feeling that the open fields of Somerset are fast turning into a nodal point for geopolitical networking, Deng Xiaoping's adopted grandson also goes to the school, though he had to return to Beijing recently for the funeral of the paramount leader.

Why, then, do the old Reds love Millfield? "Being bang in the middle of nowhere, it's good for security," says an old boy, "and it's reassuringly expensive, at around



£15,000 a year, for all that flash new Russian money." All they need now is Chelsea, Clinton, and Millfield would have a superpower full house.

Off side

THE latest presentational brain-wave from the Tories is not to let their ministers be photographed in profile. A photographer was told this as he tried to snap Brian Whimsey, the party chairman, and Gillian Shepherd, Education Secretary, at a press conference in Conservative Central Office yesterday morning.

As he was escorted away from

the sides, it was explained to him that long shots down a table make the honchos look too much like a politburo.

Helping Hans

BOTANY is coming to Chelsea, courtesy of Jill, Duchess of Hamilton. The super-enthusiastic Australian former wife of the present Duke of Hamilton, is hoping to raise £500,000 for a statue of the 17th-century botanist Sir Hans Sloane, to stand in Sloane Square, Chelsea.

She is also busy planning gar-



Julian Barnes: Empire disloyalist

dens and bird fountains round the borough. Her big idea is for people to cultivate gardens and plants which are useful to wildlife. Her supporters include the upmarket hippies Sir Mark Palmer and Lady Christopher Thynne, sister-in-law of Lord Bath, who are both descendants of Sir Hans.

"People associate Sloane with shopping boutiques," says the Duchess. "It's high time they associated it with botany again."

Julian Barnes, the novelist, has been denigrating the British male in *Barcelona*. Speaking at a conference the other day, he said: "The British Empire was the product of sexual repression. The conquerors set off on their voyages for sexual motives." At this he paused, then added: "I know that my theory is not very flattering to British women."

Safe site

THERE is an extraordinary eclecticism to the activities of Lord Parkinson these days. Last week the former Tory party chairman was the rather incongruous guest of honour at the launch of *The Asian Times* at a ball buffet in central London. Now the Internet company of which he is chairman, Planet Online, has just won the



Oil's well: Sheikh Yamani and daughter Mai in younger days

right to carry the decidedly raucous website of Durex, the Carlier of contraception. On the site, readers will be able to take a romantic IQ test, receive hot tips on spicing up their love lives and investigate a miscellaneous section. Speaking from his office in the Lords, Parkinson sounded amused: "I'm afraid I know nothing of this."

Mai flies

ONCE again, the name Yamani is in the news. Anyone who remembers the oil crisis of the mid-Seventies, when the Arab states determined to push up the price of



Oil's well: Sheikh Yamani and daughter Mai in younger days

oil against Western opposition, will remember the super-smooth figure of Sheikh Ahmed Zaki Yamani, the Saudi Oil Minister.

Now his daughter, Mai Yamani, has been appointed a fellow of the Royal Institute of International Affairs at Chatham House. Her subject: the post oil-boom generation in the Gulf.

Miss Yamani was the first Saudi woman to win a doctorate from Oxford University. She has edited a collection of essays on feminism and Islam, and is a fierce opponent of the way women are treated in Saudi Arabia.

Alan Coren



Why I felt a frisson at the scent wars on Wall St

Where you, on the off-chance, to inquire why I was so grateful today to Mr Chandler Thomson and Ms Alice Dale, commodity traders of New York City, I should reply that it was because it's been far too long since I last gave serious consideration to the legs which so signally interfered with my ambition to be a dab hand at *Beowulf*. Chandler and Alice have, though they do not know it, jogged the memory of 40 years: in a trice, they have borne me back not merely to the reading room of the Bodleian Library, but to the very shaft of mottled sunshine in which, that distant spring, I sat, the great epic open on the desk before me, my Anglo-Saxon dictionary to the left of it, my notebook to the right, my eyes down, my nib poised — and my ear cocked for the next mind-blowing surruration as the stockings opposite slowly crossed one another yet again.

Where the mind was blown to need not be specified: what was more important for me then, as it is for Chandler and Alice now, is where it was blown from. Driven off-course, day after day, by the siren chorus of a dozen undergraduate thighs, it left the books, it left the desk, it left the room, and by the time it had struggled back, it was in no shape adequately to deal with yogh and thorn. Most mornings, indeed, it had to be taken outside, leaned against a wall, and given a recuperative fag. That is why I never became a dab hand at *Beowulf*.

Not, of course, that Chandler and Alice are required to concentrate on Old English lettering. Old English letters are not commodities: had you, in 904, put all your money into yoghs and thorns, you would be broke today. What Chandler and Alice are required to concentrate on is sugar and spice and all things volatile they sit with their eyes glued to their screens, and when they see the spot price for faggot futures go from 17.2 points to 17.4, they make themselves and their clients rich; but if for any reason their eyes become momentarily unglued, and faggot futures drop back down again to 17.1 without Chandler or Alice clocking it, they and their clients could well wind up squatting in Wall Street with a tin cup and a banjo.

That is why the pair, as you may have read, are currently locked in furious (and, this being New York, litigious) battle over Alice's scent. For Chandler's trading performance had been falling off for some weeks, and when his superiors voiced their concern, Chandler was politically undisciplined enough to blame this on his having been distracted by everything from the Channel No 5 with which Alice, who perched beside him, sloshed on each morning, to the various areas whereon she sloshed it, many of which were covered in little else. Hearing this, the superiors, being more feministically illiterate even than Chandler, politely invited Alice to dress down a bit, and give a shorter tweak to the perfume pump.

Alice, of course, went nuclear; tactically nuclear, I dare say, or, on second thoughts, don't dare. Pausing only to observe that a big reason for her own performance's outshining Chandler's was "because I feel good in my body", she Forsched round to her lawyers, who are now seeking a public apology from both Chandler and the firm, plus a million bucksworth of emollient. Fine, par for the US legal course, nothing to write home or column about, but wait, who is this in the screaming Ferrari only two blocks behind Alice? Yes, it is Chandler, on his way to instruct his lawyers to counter-sue her for "ambient harassment", worth, this time, two million dollars. Now, this one is not par for the course at all. This one is several strokes under, each of which, I have no doubt, America's lawyers will henceforth be straining to pull. Might this doctor have developed a career-threatening tic as the result of his patient's cleavage, did the woman sitting opposite that top novelist on the subway wink at him, thereby wiping the plot of his next bestseller forever from his brain, has this billionaire lost count of his money after the brushing of his knee by one attached to a voluptuous dinner guest? More to the point, when we, as we invariably do, follow where the US has led, might I be able to track down the owners of those stockings without which I could well, today, have been a Regius professor?

P.H.S



ARCHBISHOP ERROR

Carey was unwise to stray beyond matters spiritual

Many possible moves might provide additional support for the Church of England. The adoption of an Anglican foreign policy is not one of them. The Archbishop of Canterbury must have appreciated that a sermon delivered in Jerusalem would have sensitive significance. The historic struggle between Christians and Jews for control of the city only heightens the need for diplomacy. Despite that, the Archbishop chose to attack the Israeli Government's plans for new housing settlements and endorsed the notion of a full Palestinian state.

The explosive potential of the issues was, of course, no reason for Dr Carey to remain silent. He was entitled to assert, as he did, that Jerusalem is a holy site for three of the world's great religions and that those who exercise control over it should recognise that fact in their actions. Open access to shrines for each faith is a legitimate issue for all spiritual leaders. The Archbishop went beyond that, however, to offer strong support for a particular form of secular territorial outcome. His decision was unwise in principle and unhelpful in practice.

Nor were matters helped by his timing. Even by the standards of the peace process, the atmosphere is tense at present. The latest crisis centres on Israel's announcement of some 6,500 settlements in East Jerusalem and its decision to hand back a rather smaller pocket of the West Bank to the Palestinian National Authority than Yasser Arafat had expected. King Hussein of Jordan has expressed his distrust of Benjamin Netanyahu. Mr Arafat has slammed the phone down on him. Even President Clinton has expressed his regrets. Meanwhile the brutal stabbing of an Israeli soldier yesterday will have only hardened the Likud Administration's outlook.

Recent precedent suggests a pattern behind the current impasse. Mr Netanyahu is locked into the peace process but is determined to drive a much harder bargain than Shimon Peres would have accepted. He also heads a coalition in which his own supporters constitute a minority and a Cabinet with many members whose beliefs and constituencies are far more uncompromising than his own. The concessions he offers need to be offset by counter-balancing measures that will appease his more strident followers. Mr Arafat faces a similar dilemma. He has no realistic alternative bar dialogue with Israel but faces constant pressure from fanatical extremists.

As the events of the past year have shown, it is difficult but not impossible to dovetail these two positions. The procedure has to be both detailed and delicate. Sweeping pronouncements from outsiders such as Dr Carey, no matter what their intention, are more likely to offer ammunition to fundamentalists on both sides than assist that complex dialogue. The Middle East needs its temperature lowered not raised by external observers such as the Archbishop.

Even in terms of his own professed objectives, the Archbishop's outburst made little sense. He called for a city of "two people, three faiths". Yet supporters of a Palestinian homeland favour partition of Jerusalem, with the eastern sector as its capital. That is a recipe for divided people and segregated faiths. Whatever changes further negotiations might realise, one principle should be clear. Real peace demands reconciliation not redivision. Jerusalem should be unified in status with an integrated population. How that happens is a matter for the politicians. It is not for the Archbishop of Canterbury.

BACK TO FASHODA

Paris attempts a replay of African history

In Africa they call it the Fashoda syndrome, the struggle for the heart of Africa. They do not mean the war between the Hutus and the Tutsis, though that is still raging, nor the rebellion in eastern Zaïre that has brought Laurent Kabila and others opposing the dictatorship of President Mobutu to the gates of Kisangani. The syndrome is the rivalry between France and Britain and the French desire to avenge the last confrontation, when Kitchener advanced up the Nile in 1896 and halted French attempts to establish a series of forts in Sudan. The Fashoda Incident established the limits of francophone and English-speaking Africa. Now, France suspects, the anglophones are expanding beyond that boundary.

This is what lies at the heart of President Chirac's call yesterday for an international intervention force to halt the rebel advance. M Chirac denounced the "conspiracy of silence" which has greeted French reports of genocide of the fleeing Hutus by advancing Tutsi rebels. And he appealed to America and Europe to support a French initiative in enforcing a ceasefire and rushing humanitarian aid to the area.

His calls have fallen on deaf ears in Washington, London and other capitals that were ready to support a Canadian-led force last year. For it is clear to all except the French that M Chirac's proposal would achieve nothing to help the beleaguered Africans and much that would bolster the waning political and economic influence of France. The West has an interest in safeguarding the rich mineral resources of eastern Zaïre: it has none in risking Western lives to save President Mobutu from the insurgent anger of a nation that he has plundered for more than 30 years.

France, however, is cynically attempting to prop up the tottering Government in Kinshasa in the belief that Mr Mobutu will maintain France's dominant position in the former Belgian colony and in the neighbouring francophone countries. Having armed and backed the Hutu killers in Rwanda, France is now desperately trying to justify its self-serving policies. It maintains that the advancing rebels have massacred the Hutu perpetrators of the Rwanda genocide, now fleeing deeper into the Zaïre jungle to escape retribution; it insists that Mr Mobutu, recuperating in his villa in southern France, is the legitimate and effective ruler; and it accuses the British and Americans of trying to advance their interests by backing the Rwanda Government, largely composed of English-speaking exiles returning from Uganda.

None of this is true. The Dutch special envoy has said after visiting Zaïre that there are no massacre sites. The long-suffering Zaïreans have welcomed the rebels as a relief from the marauding Zaïre army and the value of the currency has risen in rebel-held territory. And while it is true that Rwanda is now so hostile to France that it has applied for Commonwealth membership as a way of throwing over the francophone hegemony, this is not part of an Anglo-American conspiracy.

France, with bases all across central and West Africa, is playing a neo-colonial game increasingly unacceptable to the countries concerned. If Paris wants help from Britain and America in sharing the burden of establishing an African peacekeeping force, it should halt its policies of *revanche* and accept that African interests are not always synonymous with French primacy.

OPEN FOR BUSINESS

Laws cannot protect jobs, only competition can

Passing laws is a poor way of preserving jobs. The purpose of the Acquired Rights Directive, whose working was tested in the European Court of Justice yesterday, is to insulate employees from the consequences of competition. Regulating labour conditions can, however, no more guarantee employment stability in the end than fixing exchange rates can guarantee that of currencies. In both cases the market cannot, and should not, be bucked.

The Directive was originally designed to protect those whose jobs were threatened by takeover. It has since been invoked by employees who have been made redundant when their employers have been beaten in a competitive tendering process. Yesterday, however, the ECJ ruled against a German cleaner, Frau Ayse Suzen, who lost her job when her employers lost their contract.

Superficially, the Luxembourg Court's judgment suggests a proper sensitivity to market realities. If a company is forced to keep on employees when it can longer afford to do so then the viability of the entire enterprise is threatened. All the jobs which were supposed to be protected are imperilled; far from providing protection for the few, regulation can harm the many.

Compulsory competitive tendering has introduced market pressures into the delivery of local services. Its successful operation depends on being able to withdraw contracts from poorly performing service providers. Insisting that employees whose company loses a contract keep their positions impedes that flexibility. It gives privileges to the

inefficient, providing sinecures for those who should be public servants.

Unfortunately for Europe's workers, although the ECJ was right to find against Frau Suzen, the nature of the Acquired Rights Directive provides no guarantee that the correct decisions will be taken in future. Yesterday's judgment does not appear to set even the modest precedent of excluding all contracting-out from the scope of the directive. The Luxembourg court's application of the directive can hold contractors liable when they take over significant "undertakings". The definition of taking over an undertaking is, however, still insufficiently precise. The Government, understandably, wants clarity and is negotiating in the current inter-governmental conference to secure a revision of the directive acceptable to all. A renegotiation of the directive would be welcome, but better still would be a more comprehensive review of the social costs of EU arrangements.

For the 23 chairmen and chief executives who wrote to the *Financial Times* yesterday to attack Euroscepticism such a stance might seem uncomfortably close to the "arm's length attitude" they deplore. In their desire to see no evil in the EU, however, the big businessmen are in danger of adopting Pollyanna politics. The single market has brought benefits, but many of those have been undermined by counter-productive EU legislation, made worse by European Court judgments. For many struggling small enterprises the Europe of the Court of Justice is not so much open for business as closed to their complaints.

Home Secretary replies on bugging

From the Home Secretary

Sir, Dr Ian G. Bogle of the British Medical Association and others (letter, March 10) express continuing concerns about the Police Bill's provisions on intrusive surveillance.

We have tabled substantial amendments to the Bill in response to the concerns that were originally raised. If an operation is in a sensitive category, including any that are likely to intrude on medical confidentiality, the police will normally be required to obtain the approval of a commissioner — who will be a serving or retired High Court judge — before that operation begins.

Prior approval will not be required in urgent cases, but the commissioner will have to be notified as soon as practicable. The notification must set out the authorising officer's reasons for believing the case to be one of urgency. The commissioner will scrutinise all such notifications and may quash any authorisation which he is not satisfied has been properly given.

I believe our amended proposals provide a rigorous and effective system for oversight of these operations by a senior judicial figure. The only difference between our approach and that of the BMA is in our provision for urgent cases. I cannot accept that we should risk losing what can be a very narrow window of opportunity to mount an operation because of a requirement to seek prior approval. A surveillance operation can be a matter of life and death — for example when a hostage is being held — and minutes can be crucial.

I am sure that the commissioners will look closely at the use made of these urgency procedures and will ensure that they are not abused. I am convinced that they are essential.

Yours faithfully,
MICHAEL HOWARD,
Home Office,
Queen Anne's Gate, SW1,
March 11.

Reproduction ethics

From Dr Sammy Lee

Sir, The reproduction revolution has not only caught the public imagination but has also raised serious worries, with headline stories about embryo reduction for social reasons, octuplet pregnancy, limited-duration frozen embryo storage, the rights of lesbian and gay couples to have and raise families and, more recently, the spectre of children from the grave (posthumous conception) ("Diane Blood wins right to have dead husband's baby", February 28).

Technology has already outstripped public understanding of what is on offer, and in the years to come there will be many more challenges to traditional values and beliefs.

Those of us working in the field are equally affected. In assisting in the creation of persons (and also in the creation of parents), do we run the risk of giving in to any aspect of human desire regarding reproduction? What are our duties in the face of the attitude that science must provide a child at any cost?

There is no requirement under the Human Fertilisation and Embryology Act for fertility units to have their own ethical committees, to which cases or issues raising concern can be referred. I believe making such committees compulsory will be crucial in helping us to decide in which direction changes may be made and how far we should go.

Yours faithfully,
SAMMY LEE,
Fertility Unit,
Portland Hospital,
335-241 Great Portland Street, W1,
March 6.

Airbus forecasts

From Mr Richard Hill

Sir, The prospect (report, March 7) of 800-seat aircraft incorporating games rooms, duty-free shopping arcades, bars and restaurants may sound like a recipe for disaster, but what damage will 1,400 of these monsters do to the environment?

Airbus Industrie plans to build the aircraft to meet an 84 per cent increase in long-haul traffic within the next 20 years, particularly to and from the Far East. In putting these figures forward the company mentions the very important problem of increased noise around airports, but what about the global environment? Such a massive increase in air travel must significantly augment the pollution of the upper atmosphere and add to global warming.

Two points stand out. Firstly, the absurd system of adding to aircraft weight, and therefore to fuel consumption, by selling "duty free" products in the air should be curtailed, not increased. Secondly, the environment surely cannot sustain unlimited expansion in air travel.

Since the "Earth summit" of 1992 in Rio de Janeiro, the Government is rightly adopting measures to reduce emissions from cars on a national basis. It is becoming imperative that trends in international air traffic should be the subject of urgent study.

Yours faithfully,
RICHARD HILL,
The Saplings,
Highleigh, Chichester, Sussex
March 8.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

1 Pennington Street, London E1 9KN Telephone 0171-782 5000

Debate on merits of public or private pension provision

From Mr Richard Worsley

Sir, The Government's pensions proposals (leading article, "The pension plan", March 6) should not be criticised on the grounds of cost.

As the population gets older and the value of the state pension steadily reduces through indexation to prices, any government must face the inevitability of increasing pension cost. These proposals accept that inevitability but also have the merit of striking a balance between the roles of individuals, employers and the State in funding retirement income.

They also provide a strategy for long-term containment of the cost of pensions on taxpayers and those still at work. Any credible critic must come up with alternatives which address those requirements.

However, the value of personal pension funds can go down as well as up. While the Government's guarantee of at least the state pension is therefore an essential element of the proposals, it remains linked only to prices. The Government is swift to point out that some individuals could do well out of the proposals: they contain no guarantee that others might not continue to do very badly. Should the Government not also act as a guarantor of at least some element of personal pensions?

Secondly, the record of the personal pensions sector has been badly tarnished by mis-selling. As you said in your leading article, "Pay as you earn" (March 8), the expanded role of the sector under these proposals needs to be accompanied by convincing reassurance about its regulation.

Finally, the timing of this announcement carries the risk that discussion of the proposals may be prejudiced by electoral point-scoring. If there is a single issue which should

transcend political squabbling, it is the responsibility we all carry to leave the next generation with a sound, stable and permanent system of retirement income.

Yours faithfully,
RICHARD WORSLEY (Director),
The Carnegie Third Age Programme,
PO Box 160, Burnham Norton,
Kings Lynn, Norfolk,
March 8.

From Mr Robin Oldroyd

Sir, The Government's new proposals on pensions are welcome. However, there are bound to be reservations about the performance of the companies involved under such a scheme.

Would not the answer be for the major portion of pensions contributions, which is invested in equities, to be put into index-linked funds similar to the Peps index-linked schemes run by Virgin, Legal & General and others? This would calm investors' fears about which companies perform best, keep costs low and, as with the Peps schemes, probably produce better than average performance.

Yours faithfully,
R. OLDROYD,
Ashlands,
Belmont Road, Bath,
March 6.

From Mr Simon Crine

Sir, Your criticisms of Labour's response to Peter Lilley's plans for privatising pensions (leading article and Riddell on politics, March 6) are misplaced. On this occasion, both caution and scepticism are in order, given the ideologically driven nature of Mr Lilley's proposals.

The basic state pension is far from perfect — too low to start with, thanks to its de-indexing from earnings — but

it gives real meaning to the phrase social security. Many, if not most, people would rather that the ultimate guarantee of some income in old age was provided directly by the State. Serps, with all its faults, offers a public earnings-related pension option that is supported even by those who do not choose to use it for themselves. It enhances choice.

The future is much more likely to lie with a blending of the social security offered by the state pensions and the individual security offered by private pensions. Labour is right to be cautious, for the real issue is about how to encourage all of us to save more for our old age, not about public versus private provision.

Yours faithfully,
SIMON CRINE,
27 Jackson Road, N7,
March 7.

From Mr K. D. Boyd

Sir, Congratulations on your leader today. It is amongst the best descriptions of the pensions mis-selling fiasco I have read.

However, the "snake-oil salesmen" are not the only culprits. I would add the regulator, who appears to have been asleep when pensions were deregulated. Had he done his job at the time, you need never have written your leader.

Perhaps, in the cases of pension transfers, the activities of the employers' schemes were not blameless either.

Yours faithfully,
KENNETH BOYD,
Boyd & Associates
(Independent financial advisers),
The Oast House,
Holt Pound, Farnham, Surrey,
March 8.

Divine intervention?

From the Reverend Richard Dorman

Sir, Can we now expect another round of "Science proves the Bible" headlines? Evidence from Dr Marie-Agnes Courty, to be discussed at a conference in Cambridge in July, will suggest that the destruction of Bronze Age cities was caused by the impact of comets or meteorites (report, March 8).

Sodom and Gomorrah were two such cities, about which Genesis xix, 24 and 25 (New International Version) says:

Then the Lord rained down burning sulphur on Sodom and Gomorrah from the Lord out of the heavens. Thus he overthrew those cities and the entire plain, including all those living in the cities and also the vegetation in the land.

Since scholars normally place Abraham near the beginning of the Middle Bronze age (circa 2,000-1,900 BC) one cannot but note the chronological coincidence with Dr Courty's findings of extraterrestrial deposits in the Middle East, dated circa 2,200 BC.

The question remaining, however, is what actually happened to Lot's wife — in modern geological terms that is?

Yours faithfully,
RICHARD DORMANDY,
Holy Trinity Vicarage,
1 Sydenham Park Road, SE26,
March 8.

Magnificent seven

From Mrs Hilary de Birch

Sir, Come wind, rain and northeast gales, there are still seven apples firmly attached to our apple tree from the crop of 1996.

At the same time the branches are in bud in preparation for the fruits of the coming summer.

Yours faithfully,
HILARY DE BIRCH,
201 Sunderland Road,
South Shields, Tyne and Wear,
March 4.

'Kitchen slavery'

From Mrs Krystia Gossage

Sir, I don't have the time to investigate the possibility of cloning Mrs Caroline Zoob's paragon of a husband (letter, March 11). Could I just have him, please?

Yours faithfully,
KRYSZIA GOSSAGE,
Little Brays,
Kington Stort,
Chinnor, Oxfordshire,
March 11.

From Mr David Elston

Sir, Along, I suspect, with most other husbands in the land, I am fervently praying that the Zoob family, particularly the apparently unbearable Mr Zoob, does not move in next door.

Yours sincerely,
DAVID ELSTON,
8 Mayfield Terrace, Edinburgh,
March 11.

From Lady Lea

Sir, I fully support Philippa Grace's high opinion of dishwashers (letter, March 10).

I am so fond of mine that I have been married to him for nearly 50 years.

Yours sincerely,
PATRICIA LEA,
Springfield, 27 Bright's Lane,
Hayling Island, Hampshire,
March 10.

Gorbachev's legacy

From Mr Oleg Gordievsky

Sir, In his unrestrained panegyric of Gorbachev (article, "Heroes of transition", March 7) Matthew Parris loses his sense of balance and ignores elementary historical facts.

Gorbachev did not try to create a free and democratic society in the USSR but aimed to improve the communist system by making it competitive with the West. Contrary to Parris's statement that Gorbachev "introduced a pluralist economy" he constantly spoke against it and only in the final year of his tenure did he reluctantly start speaking of a "socialist market".

A pluralist economy of a sort was created by Yegor Gaidar, with the support of Boris Yeltsin, in 1992. Contrary also to Parris's words that Gorbachev "arranged for free elections... and a multiparty system", he battled against them. The last Soviet democrat, with Andrei Sakharov was

their head, who led the struggle for the abolition of the Communist Party's monopoly on power. Gorbachev insulted the latter in public for this, very soon after which the Nobel prizewinner died.

When certain Soviet republics attempted to win freedom Gorbachev, with the help of the army and the KGB, created bloodbaths in Tbilisi, Baku and Vilnius. The contention that he "almost singlehandedly ended the Cold War and the arms race" is an absurdity, ignoring more important factors such as the West's growing technological and military superiority, the assertive and intelligent policy towards the USSR of American, British and West German leaders and diplomats and the tough opposition to totalitarian tyranny on the part of the people of Eastern Europe.

Yours faithfully,
OLEG GORDIEVSKY,
c/o A. M. Heath,
79 St Martin's Lane, WC2,
March 7.

Democracy and EU

From Mr Richard A. Edwards

Sir, Is it any surprise that people are becoming disenchanted with democracy when an ever-increasing number of laws are made without any democratic pedigree (Lord Nolan's article, March 8)? There are, for example, more than 21 ways of legislating under the EU treaties none of which involves democracy in a meaningful way.

Moreover, the competence of our Parliament is forever shrinking. In the winter months of 1995 public opinion was very much in favour of prohibiting live calf exports. A Bill could, in my view, have been passed by Parliament. However, as our Parliament is no longer competent to ban such exports, under the Treaty of Rome, what choice do those who feel passionately about the issue have but to protest?

Debate, as Lord Nolan points out, is essential to democracy. This country faces the imminent decision of whether to hand over control of our economic affairs to another unelected committee in Europe. Yet where is the debate on this vital issue?

At the risk of sounding like one of the youthful cynics Lord Nolan was inveighing against, politics is increasingly a show theatre. And this is why it is so unattractive to many of us.

Yours faithfully,
RICHARD A. EDWARDS,
60 Queen's Road, Devises, Wiltshire,
March 8.

Inflation and progress

From Dr J. W. McNuff

Sir, I have kept a note of the cost of renewing the batteries for my transistor radio. In March, 1994, this was £2.65; in August, 1995, the same leading brand cost £3.39 and now, in March, 1997 I have had to pay £3.99 (a 50 per cent rise in three years).

The manufacturer will argue, perhaps, that I am paying more for an improved product — and indeed the life of these batteries does seem to have increased from around 17 months to around 19 months.

But would it not be better if we could occasionally restrain "progress" and go on paying much the same price for much the same product?

Yours faithfully,
JOHN MCNUFF,
West Barn,
Hall Place, Seer Green,
Beaconsfield, Buckinghamshire,
March 1.

Country consensus

From Mr Robert A. Morley

Sir, Your call (leading article, "Country consensus", March 8) for hunters, shooters and fishers to unite is very apposite in the sense that there must surely be a deep insecurity in the psyche of those who can actually enjoy injuring or taking the life of any living creature.

Ogden Nash puts it in a nutshell: This grown-up man, with pluck and luck, Is hoping to outwit a duck.

Yours faithfully,
R. A. MORLEY,
25 Rectory Road,
Southport, Merseyside,
March 8.

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**PROFESSOR
L. C. KNIGHTS**

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Holocaust homework: we all must do it

When I wrote criticising Ruby Wax last month, the last thing I expected to unleash was anti-Semitism. I had mentioned that Wax, a sharp comic in the American-Jewish tradition, could do better with her BBC series than make jokes about this, bums and stretch marks. For this I was rewarded with an anonymous letter commenting: "Wax is typically Jewish, always anxious to make money out of sex whether in the media, the arts or medicine."

Was this any uglier than another, from an agnostic Jew from an Orthodox family in north London? "A congratulatory thank-you for your splendid piece on Ruby Wax — the personification of the worst kind of Jewish vulgarity." This letter had the virtue of a signature, an address and an assurance of best wishes. I wonder what this reader will make of tonight's *A Jewish Wedding* on BBC2, which stresses the very un-English, noisy and conspicuous consumption side of the Jewish way of marriage. Now about 750,000 people buy *The Times* every day, so it stands to reason that there will be the occasional anti-Semite among them. But it was a shock to be reminded so bluntly that the dark undercurrent still flows strong.

A quick look around, however, shows that for many people, the world is still divided into Jew and non-Jew. A German journalist's reference to "the Jew Rifkin" makes headlines. *The Washington Post* gets a great scoop by revealing that the American Secretary of State is not only Jewish but did not know that she had three grandmothers who died in the Holocaust.

Is Madeleine Albright guilty of the great sin of trying to conceal her Jewishness? Is the Swiss banking system built on the rock of unclaimed Jewish gold? Should it be a crime to deny the Holocaust?

The Holocaust is news. This hideous event demands not mere celebration like the other Second World War anniversaries but a willingness, for young and old, to face new facts too horrific and too scattered to be understood when the camps were opened in 1945. Yet humankind cannot bear very much reality, says T.S. Eliot, himself accused, by the lawyer Anthony Julius in a recent book, of literary anti-Semitism of the fashionable prewar kind. The temptation to look away is very strong. In Washington last month I found friends who, connoisseurs of museums in that city of museums, had not yet got around to the new Holocaust Museum. I paid a call, overdue. I have visited Munich without finding time for a trip out to Dachau. In Jerusalem, I was given a choice of the Holocaust Museum or the Via Dolorosa. Guess which I chose.

My particular motive in Washington was to try to answer a charge made to me in London by a Polish émigré from the 1930s

that the American press had evidence of the concentration camps long before the end of the war but had refused to print it. At the Holocaust Museum (where the exhibition has been arranged with great care in order that a visit should not be a devastating experience) there was video archive proof that some major American dailies had indeed carried early news of the Nazi mass extermination plans.

Overall, it seemed that the American press acquitted itself more honourably than the US State Department. The department was described in the exhibition's displayed texts as anti-Semitic: a background that makes the Jewishness of today's Secretary of State all the more important.

How unwelcoming Britain was to the same group is shown in another recent book, *Red Mother, Pink Daughter*, by Silvia Rodgers, wife of Lord Rodgers of Quarry Bank. In the late 1930s and early 1940s, a hard-hearted Home Office was no keener than the State Department was, in a time of mass unemployment, to let in a flood of refugees such as her family from Berlin.

Current talk in some countries of making denial of the Holocaust a crime is nonsense. This would be as much a violation of free speech as forbidding the assertion that HIV does not lead to AIDS. But there is too much Holocaust legacy around.

Take the current film box-office hit *Shine*, the story of the mentally ill Australian pianist, David Helfgott, who recovered sufficiently to resume his concert career. American Jews, reported *The New York Times* last week, are seeing this film entirely differently from non-Jews. The latter tend to take it as a heartwarming tale of triumph over handicap and redemption through love. But Jews see it rather as the story of a Holocaust victim once removed. In this light, David's father, having survived the camps where many of his relatives, as David madly joked "got concentrated", goes to inhuman lengths to drive his son to be a survivor, thus destroying him.

For all generations, the Holocaust is unfinished homework. The object is not so much how to prevent it happening again because it has happened again, in Cambodia, Bosnia and Rwanda. Rather, the assignment is to ask ourselves how much we are all guilty of the casual slurs that dehumanise an entire group. The joke about "bog-brained Murphies" in Channel 4's *Brass Eye* last week shows that the Thick Mick is still good for a laugh.

An even tougher question is how welcoming we want to be today to alien millions fleeing a murderous regime. I'm sure that the people of Hong Kong would like to know.



BRENDA MADDOX

US Vogue plucks Plum

BRITAIN'S dominance of New York's fashion scene will be boosted by the arrival of Plum Sykes at American *Vogue*. Sykes, who has written for *British Vogue* for the past four years, was persuaded to move to New York by Anna Wintour, the British Editor of American *Vogue*.

There was little that Alexandra Shulman, the Editor of *British Vogue*, could do to stop her. Sykes has a higher profile and Condé Nast's titles in Europe simply cannot compete with the wages paid by its American counterparts. While overseeing fashion editorial, Sykes will not be deprived of English accents. Brits such as the editor-at-large, Hamish Bowles, work at American *Vogue*. And her sister Lucy works on *Town & Country* and dates Toby Young, a columnist in New York for *London's Evening Standard*.

Paul Spike's purge at *Punch*, where he has just been made Editor, continues apace, with Julie Burchill the latest victim. Last week, Sir



Plum Sykes, left, and Anna Wintour: American colleagues

Peregrine Worsthorpe was bumped off the mag, where he had only just settled. Now the acerbic Burchill, who has served gallantly as television critic, is for the chop. Into her heels the familiar figure of the former *Speculator* Editor and columnist for hire, Alexander Chancellor.

Blank screen

AFTER more than a year of preparation, the BBC has abandoned plans to set up an independent film company. BBC Films Ltd. Industry

observers put the collapse of the idea down to "departmental jealousies".

The decision has disappointed Charles Denton, the Beeb's respected former drama head, who has spent the past year as a consultant, advising the BBC on the films plan. He says: "I am very sorry about this decision, which I feel is bizarre. The common-sense, business and creative arguments in favour of a separate film company all seemed to have been accepted." He adds that the BBC's plan now to merge its films production arm into the single

drama department is equally baffling. "Making theatrical feature films is," he says, "wholly different from making television drama."

Now that he has nothing on which to advise the BBC, Denton will leave the corporation on April 1. So who will head the newly merged films/single drama department: Mark Shivas, head of BBC film, or David Thompson, acting head of single drama?

The former *Radio 1* host arrived late at London's Grosvenor House Hotel with fellow bad boys Danny Baker, late of *Radio 5 Live*, and Paul Gascoigne. The trio, who had been having a few pints (that much was obvious), suddenly remembered they had to be at the awards. As soon as they arrived, they thought better of it and left. Charming.

Decoding Scots

BBC Scotland's drama about a small-town local copper, *Hamish Macbeth*, which returns for a third series on Sunday, was an instant hit with Australian viewers when the first two series were screened Down Under last year.

Debates were held on national television and radio over whether the series should have subtitles for those not familiar with Scottish accents. A Wee Jock Appreciation Society was formed and a *Hamish Macbeth* site was set up on the Internet for fans worldwide to catch up on the latest news from Lochdubh.

What a card

THE loyalty card scheme pioneered by supermarkets is having unexpected success among Radio 5 listeners. When Sainsbury's launched its scheme, Eddie Mair joked on his *Midday with Mair* show that he was planning his own card for dedicated listeners. The station was swamped with applications. Realising he had better deliver the goods, the presenter's team arranged benefits for cardholders. These include 10 per cent off a meal in Adelaide (yes, in Australia) and £2 off any journey costing more than £10 from one game taxi driver in Cardiff.

Chris Birkett, Mair's editor, says: "It was just an off-the-cuff remark by Eddie, but now we have 1,000 cardholders and are holding our first cardholders convention in Manchester this month."

Industry fights 'threats'

ADVERTISING

ADVERTISERS ceremoniously threw down the gauntlet to politicians and media owners yesterday in an unprecedented display of collective power at the annual conference of their trade association, the Incorporated Society of British Advertisers (ISBA).

The gathering of more than 100 client companies ranging from Procter & Gamble to Bass Brewers, with a combined media spend of £1.5 billion, vowed to "unleash their latent power" — the title, in fact, of the conference — and to club together in the face of possible increasing threats from EU consumer groups and the Labour Party. Under threat is their freedom to advertise alcohol and tobacco, and products directed at children, coupled with the increasing cost of buying space.

In his key address, John Hooper, the ISBA's director-general, said: "It is vital that the Government realises the

impact of commercial communications to the nation's economy. Freedom to advertise is fundamental to the future well-being of ISBA member companies, their employees, customers, suppliers and shareholders."

CHILDREN'S tastes, it seems, are even more unpredictable than ever — and particularly when it comes to advertisements.

A new Leo Burnett study of nine to 15-year-olds' lifestyles, product usage and hobbies has revealed that one of their favourite ads at the moment is the Daz "doorstep challenge" starring Shane Richie. They also like the sentimental corporate film for BT, which features such shots as a child listening to its pregnant mother's stomach.

The study, carried out on behalf of its youth-oriented clients, including Nintendo, is aimed at boosting their access to the spending power of schoolchildren. According to industry estimates, the consumers of the future already have a frightening £9.6 billion at their disposal annually — and a further £3.4 billion through "pester power" of their parents.

ONE 2 ONE, the mobile phone company, has picked up the theme of its campaign starring Kate Moss and John McCarthy by carrying out a nationwide poll of who people would most like to have a "One 2 One" with.

The top three choices were Richard Branson, Nelson Mandela and Winston Churchill. The individual to whom the nation would least like to talk, however, is Oasis's Liam Gallagher. Pamela Anderson came second last.



BELINDA ARCHER: Popular choice: Winston Churchill

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Why the press is out of tune with the world of pop

Nigel Williamson examines the newspaper coverage of pop stories and, below, Brian MacArthur analyses the effect they have on circulation

People who cannot write, talking to people with nothing to say for people who cannot read, was Frank Zappa's contemptuous definition of rock journalism. Yet pop music is now regarded by editors of serious newspapers as a vital ingredient in the circulation war. Even *The Daily Telegraph*, which for long only wrote about pop in terms of its brain-rotting effect on the nation's youth, praises the new Blur album.

As Mat Snow, editor of the monthly music magazine *Mojo*, says: "The broadsheets think pop sells newspapers to young readers because it offers froth and excitement and creates a sense of instant drama."

Yet a survey of broadsheet coverage for February suggests that while arts pages now devote more space to pop than to opera and ballet, editors appear to have put little effort into pop coverage on their news pages.

The broadsheets simply chase the tabloids and write the same stories about the same acts, says Lee Ellen Newman, head of press at East-West Records. This was clearly evident in the coverage last month of the on-off wedding of Liam Gallagher and the dress sense of the Spice Girls at the Brit awards. But even with these two contrived media events, the survey shows that *The Guardian's* news pages devoted only 209 column inches to pop over the month, *The Independent* 170 inches, *The Times* 164 inches and *The Daily Telegraph* a not-even-trying 104 inches. Some traditional readers complain that even this is too much. But for an industry obsessed with the pursuit of younger readers, it seems negligently careless, an independent PR mark for his sharp eye for a news story, says "Broadsheets say they want pop stories, but they are really struggling to keep up. They don't break stories. They wait for others."

News editors do not know where to turn when their marketing departments tell them that pop music sells papers. No broadsheet newsroom employs a pop correspondent, relying instead on overstretched arts writers

who have neither the time nor the inclination to read *NME* or listen to Radio 1. *The Times* has Caitlin Moran, who writes a "voice of youth" column about the artists likely to be riding the next wave, yet she is a freelance columnist, not a staff reporter.

There are signs that the broadsheets are beginning to recognise their inadequacies. *The Guardian's* front-page story about the Gallagher-Kensit wedding purported to be by its "showbusiness correspondent". The paper has no such post and rumour has it that the "correspondent" was editor Alan Rusbridger.

Many of the pop stories which struggle onto the news pages seem to have one thing in common — the failure of the artists concerned to produce a decent record in years. Guy George and Gary Glitter were among those considered newsworthy by the broadsheets last month. Most of the artists shifting huge quantities at Our Price were not — and the Spice Girls are only an exception because no excuse to use a picture of them is too gratuitous.

The death of Brian Connolly of Sweet was widely covered as a news story and he also made the lead obituary in all of the broadsheets except *The Daily Telegraph*. He was the latest in the list of rock stars shuffling prematurely off the mortal turntable and providing a regular supply of good copy. Yet even here editors frequently get it wrong. As pop publicist Richard Wootton points out, newspapers filled pages when Jerry Garcia died, and they all knew about Sweet. But when Kurt Cobain of Nirvana committed suicide, no one in Fleet Street seemed to understand the significance.

One news editor had to ask who Chris Evans was on his departure from Radio 1. Another admitted to never having heard of the Spice Girls before their Spectator interview. A different story emerges when we turn to the arts and review pages. Our survey showed that *The Guardian* and *The Independent* (both of which have regular weekly pop sections) leading the way with 1,736 and 1,652 column inches. *The Times*



Kurt Cobain of Nirvana: critics of the quality press say that newsdesks missed the significance of his suicide

was stuck in the middle with 1,235 inches, while *The Daily Telegraph* trailed with 806 inches — including a piece warning parents that 90 per cent of pop stars smoke marijuana.

A straw poll of music industry professionals elicited high praise for the standard of writing among the critics, coupled with serious criticisms of all four broadsheets. *The Guardian* is too ready to follow the weekly pop papers. It feels like a slightly desperate attempt to be with it, says Snow. Borkowski and Snow both felt *The Independent* lacked direction. "But

in Andy Gill they have one of the most astute commentators, who often spots things others miss," says Wootton.

David Sinclair of *The Times* is equally well-regarded — "the most authoritative," in Snow's judgment. "But *The Times* suffers badly by not having a dedicated pop section," says Wootton, a view widely echoed, although the diet of live reviews and strong pop features in the magazine are seen as partial compensation.

The Daily Telegraph is the joker in the pack. "They will never understand pop music, so they allow their critics to set their own agendas which

is always interesting," says Snow. Most of the names commanding space in the broadsheets enjoyed their greatest success in other decades — Donovan, Bruce Springsteen, Aerosmith, U2 and Depeche Mode were typical subjects.

Snow defends the slant. "Springsteen and Donovan, simply because they have a history and a depth and a set of influences, have a more interesting story to tell than the latest teen craze and it is a story readers in their forties want to read."

Nigel Williamson is a former news editor of *The Times* and is now a freelance writer.

Too much choice can be a turn-off

Satellite TV is taking its toll on family viewing, says Milly Jenkins

The traditional living room of a nuclear family, with two parents and 2.2 children watching their favourite programmes together, may soon be a thing of the past.

New evidence suggests that the increase in non-nuclear families in Britain is beginning to affect TV viewing habits. As the number of channels proliferates, there is growing conflict in many households about what to watch. The result is that families are watching less, while non-nuclear households watch more.

With as many as 200 new satellite channels coming on stream, the television industry will be looking at this research with some anxiety. Audience researcher David Graham will be presenting his findings at this week's Television Show, the annual industry gathering.

His research shows that the nuclear family with access to only four terrestrial channels will still watch TV together. But once they have access to many more channels, they fight about who chooses the programme and end up watching less. "If, say, one member of the family takes over the family set and watches the football on satellite, the others who don't like football will drift off," says Graham. "They may drift off to watch something else on another set. But what seems to be happening is that they go off and do something completely different."

The drop in average weekly viewing figures continues to fall every year. In 1992 the average person watched nearly 27 hours of television a week. By 1996 that had dropped to 25. Those households watching the most TV are the ones with the least amount of conflict: Britain's growing number of single households and young couples. "The interpretation of that is that when they're young, couples enjoy and watch the same things," says Graham. "But older married couples do not. They watch in different rooms."

Sheila Byfield, media development director of Ogilvy & Mather, is heading a research project into the impact of new technology on households. She agrees that there is a move away from family viewing. "It's mostly dictated by time. There are time segments when children dominate. At other times people make appointments to view *Coronation Street*. But if nothing has been decided, it often seems to be a male decision. Men tend to control the remote control."

More than two-thirds of British households have two or more TV sets. Extra sets are mostly located in bedrooms, with 12 per cent in the kitchen. More than half of 10 to 15-year-olds have TVs in their bedrooms. The Independent Television Commission's (ITC) annual report, *Television: The Public's View*, gives some indication of the taste differences between family members. Men are more likely to watch news, current affairs, comedy and sport. Women prefer soaps, chat shows and health programmes. Films, pop programmes and sitcoms get the highest children's ratings.

David Graham's research shows that the biggest divide in tastes are generational. Families with teenagers are the most likely to be at war over programme choice. "They may be very choosy, maybe just watching *ER* and *Friends*," says Graham. When there is conflict about what to watch, computers and games consoles have become an important alternative option for children. Older family members are also being lured away from the TV by computers. According to The Henry Centre's Media Futures survey for 1997-98, the Internet is slowly beginning to displace TV viewing time.

But David Docherty, the BBC's director of strategy and channel development, believes that families will go on watching prime-time terrestrial TV together for another 15 years.

And David Graham says: "Prime channels are the focus of conversation. People want to see the new *Birds of a Feather* and talk about it in the bus queue."

Not such a dumb idea

PAPER ROUND
Brian MacArthur



There was plenty about the Spice Girls in *The Sun* and *The Mirror* yesterday but only three newspapers featured Britain's most famous pop group on the front page. They were *The Daily Mail*, *The Daily Star* and *The Guardian*.

Along with a puff for its education section and a lead story on John Major attacking Tony Blair, *The Guardian* was plugging a two-page special in its daily tabloid on "Spice, the final frontier". A Spice Girl wrapped in the Union Jack dominated a front cover featuring six "Spicey" soundbites.

There was a time when *The Guardian* would not have considered the Spice Girls

within its editorial remit. Nor would *The Times*, *The Daily Telegraph* or *The Independent*, all of which now do (see above). Yet the idea was suggested by the *Guardian's* economics editor, Larry Elliott, who helped to write the story, and was greeted enthusiastically by colleagues, especially those with children.

There is a reason for this significant change in editorial attitudes and it is contained in the four words which have suddenly entered the cultural vocabulary in 1997. Note them. They are "Dumbing

Down" and "Dumbing Up". They have started to crop up in any discussion about national newspapers and whether they can survive and flourish into the 21st century against 24-hour news channels, instant Internet news

and a young generation that allegedly no longer finds newspapers relevant.

As one newspaper analyst strived recently to explain why sales of the serious broadsheets were increasing when sales of mass market tabloids were falling, he suggested that editors had "dumbed down to dumb up". What this meant in English was that they were reporting on pop stars, diets and health, and expanding sport sections so that their newspapers attracted new readers from the tabloids — or young readers who were interested in pop as well as politics — instead of confining their natural constituency to Parliament and current affairs.

As the Audit Bureau of Circulations report for February demonstrates, they are succeeding and Britain is becoming one of the few countries in the world where sales of serious newspapers are rising.

Year-on-year sales of the three mass market daily tabloids were down by almost 265,000 last month. Yet sales of the broadsheets rose by almost 140,000, with *The Times* and *The Daily Telegraph* up significantly and *The Guardian* and *FT* (which offering readers reduced cover prices) only marginally down in a fiercely competitive market. The highest increase — of 116,000 — was achieved by the *Daily Mail* which also believes in good, strong reads. The same trend is occurring

on Sundays where the *Mail on Sunday* is the only tabloid up on a year ago, with the Sunday broadsheets up by 240,000.

Study which newspapers have increased their share of the total national newspaper market and they are the daily and Sunday papers from the *Times*, *Telegraph* and *Mail* groups as well as *The Guardian* and the *FT* (even though their sales were slightly down). QED.

ABC reports are usually published on the second Friday of the month. Connoisseurs of newspapers enjoy the monthly "puffs" that follow on Saturday, Sunday or Monday boasting of successes — but never of failures. All of the following are true:

● The highest year-on-year percentage increase among daily newspapers was achieved by *The Times* (11.6 per cent, following a 9 per cent year-on-year increase a year ago). The *Daily Mail*, which a year ago was up by 281,000 on 1995, rose by another 116,000 year-on-year last month.

● After launching a subscription offer of seven days of *Telegraphs* for £1, *The Daily Telegraph* was up by 91,970 on the year — though Times managers point out the February sale included 63,800 at reduced prices (against 17,900 for *The Times*) and sales at full price fell by 28,000 on January.

● The same subscription offer boosted *The Sunday Telegraph* to the highest sales increase — up by 231,000 (35 per cent) — of any national newspaper. That included 139,930 sold at reduced rates. Full price sales fell by 28,000 against January.

● Over the past six months *The Sunday Times*, which outsells the *Telegraph* and *Observer* combined, has hit its highest sales since 1982.

● With a voucher promotion, both *The Independent* and *Independent on Sunday* increased sales last month but year-on-year sales of both remain down by 9 per cent.

THE FLEET STREET SALES WARS

DAILY TITLES	Av daily sales in February	Change on Feb 96	Change in market share (%)
<i>Daily Mail</i>	2,156,372	+116,654	+1.03
<i>Daily Telegraph</i>	1,119,892	+91,970	+0.77
<i>The Times</i>	767,809	+79,604	+0.65
<i>Financial Times</i>	306,464	+2,692	+0.01
<i>The Guardian</i>	400,348	+1,866	+0.01
<i>The Express</i>	1,234,401	-30,615	-0.14
<i>The Star</i>	670,286	-564	-0.16
<i>The Independent</i>	257,717	-28,092	-0.19
<i>Daily Mirror</i>	2,395,195	-179,231	-0.72
<i>The Sun</i>	3,929,151	-144,450	-0.80
SUNDAY TITLES	Av daily sales in February	Change on Feb 96	Change in market share (%)
<i>Sunday Telegraph</i>	889,803	+231,348	+1.46
<i>Sunday Times</i>	1,360,225	+45,888	+0.24
<i>Mail on Sunday</i>	2,172,376	+33,511	+0.13
<i>The Observer</i>	454,858	+7,709	+0.06
<i>News of the World</i>	4,654,563	-2,153	-0.21
<i>Ind. on Sunday</i>	282,145	-29,917	-0.21
<i>The People</i>	2,000,889	-28,126	-0.27
<i>The Express</i>	1,178,261	-101,723	-0.71
<i>Sunday Mirror</i>	2,327,806	-89,228	-0.71

Source: ABC excluding *Daily Record*

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NEWS

Tighter rules for meat hygiene

The Government promised tougher action against rogue abattoirs and failing meat inspectors last night amid allegations that ministers had been warned several times about a "potential timebomb" of declining hygiene standards.

Forty-five hygiene service employees have been disciplined, with three being dismissed, for failing to follow rules aimed at minimising the risk of "mad cow" disease. Page 1

Carey supports Palestinian state

The Archbishop of Canterbury, Dr George Carey, attacked the right-wing Israeli Government's plans to build a new Jewish settlement in occupied Arab east Jerusalem and backed the idea of a Palestinian state. The spiritual leader of the world's 70 million Anglicans echoed the Pope's condemnation last Sunday of plans to build homes for 32,000 Jews. Pages 1, 10

Pro-Europe campaign

Almost 100 pro-European MPs, including former 17 Tory ministers, launch a fresh assault on Eurosceptic opponents with a strong defence of Britain's membership of the European Union. Page 1

Asylum appeal

An asylum seeker who survived a ten-hour ordeal in the wheel bay of jumbo jet which killed his brother is to appeal against the Government's refusal to grant him refuge. Page 1

Workers' rights lost

Contract workers in hospitals, councils and other services could lose employment rights after the European Court challenged previous guarantees. Page 2

Fishing tragedies

Fishing communities in Arbroath, Angus, and St Ives, Cornwall, were in mourning as seven men were feared dead in separate accidents. Page 3

Paper mountain

Cabinet ministers were told that the ever-growing archives of government papers and documents should be cut back to save the taxpayer £7 million. Page 4

'Bogus' transfer deal

The chairman of Wigan Rugby League Club planned a bogus transfer deal so that he could sue a newspaper for thousands of pounds, a court was told. Page 5

Greatest show above Earth

Comet Hale-Bopp is providing a brilliant show as one of the best comets of the century, clearly visible round the world in the morning and evening skies. Terry Platt, an amateur astronomer from Bracknell, Berkshire, who photographed the comet at 4am, says that it is easily visible with the naked eye and comparable to the brightest stars. Page 1



Splendid spring weather brought out the largest crowds for the first day of the Cheltenham Festival. Pages 42, 43, and 48

BUSINESS

NetWest: Senior managers responsible for supervising derivatives trading are expected to have their bonuses cut when investigation results are announced. Page 25

Barings: A former director who claimed he "blew the whistle" on Nick Leeson, the trader, was banned from being a director for three years. Page 25

Redrow: Steve Morgan, chairman of the housebuilder, could realise more than £91 million from the sale of a 25 per cent stake in the company. Page 25

Markets: The FT-SE 100 rose 6.9 points to close at 4444.3. Sterling's trade-weighted index rose from 97.3 to 97.6 after a rise from \$1.6017 to \$1.6055 and from DM2.7279 to DM2.7379. Page 28

SPORT

Rugby union: Austin Healey, of Leicester, will replace Andy Gomarsall, of Wasps, at scrum half in the England team to meet Wales in Cardiff. Page 48

Racing: Make A Stand, at 7-1, won the Smurfit Champion Hurdle on the opening day of the Cheltenham Festival. He was one of two winners for the trainer Martin Pipe. Page 48

Football: Newcastle's impetus is faltering, while a team built exclusively on going forward is trying to be something it is not in terms of defensive solidarity. Page 44

Crickets: Ken Hopkins, the new chairman of Sussex, said that he was the man to take the county forward, beyond the divisive meetings that lie ahead. Page 46

ARTS

Spectacular spanners: Two British architects are taking the world of bridges by storm. Marcus Binney reports on their revolutionary "eyelid" design. Page 35

Rising star: Kelly Macdonald was the face on a thousand *Trainspotting* posters last year as schoolgirl Diane. Now she faces a live audience at the Old Vic. Page 35

Fairground attraction: How Sir Arthur Quiller-Couch's 90-year-old children's book *True Tilda* has been brought to the small screen in a six-part serial. Page 36

Star quality: As *Star Wars* prepares to take cinema audiences by storm for a second time, Geoff Brown assesses how 20 years ago director George Lucas changed the shape of movies. Page 37

FEATURES

Primary class: Nigella Lawson describes the dilemma for middle-class parents seeking a school for their children and how two families made a choice. Page 15

Suffer the children: They are linked by suffering: the girls of rural India who are doomed for the sake of family finances and Brazil's slum children. Page 17

STYLE

Necks, please: Grace Bradberry on the key to elegance this coming summer: plus, Jane Shilling on the horror of writing a large cheque then realising that you have bought the wrong dress. Page 16

MEDIA

British fashion: Another London writer has a top job in New York's fashion media. Page 22

Popping out: When the editor of a quality newspaper is said to have reported a pop music event, it is clear that broadcasters are desperate to tap into youth. Page 23

THE PAPERS

Under European supervision, Albania can still have the opportunity to repeat its political transition, one which has so far taken the country only from communism to chaos. An electoral campaign, conducted under conditions of total freedom, would be the best recipe for change. — *El País*, Madrid

TOMORROW

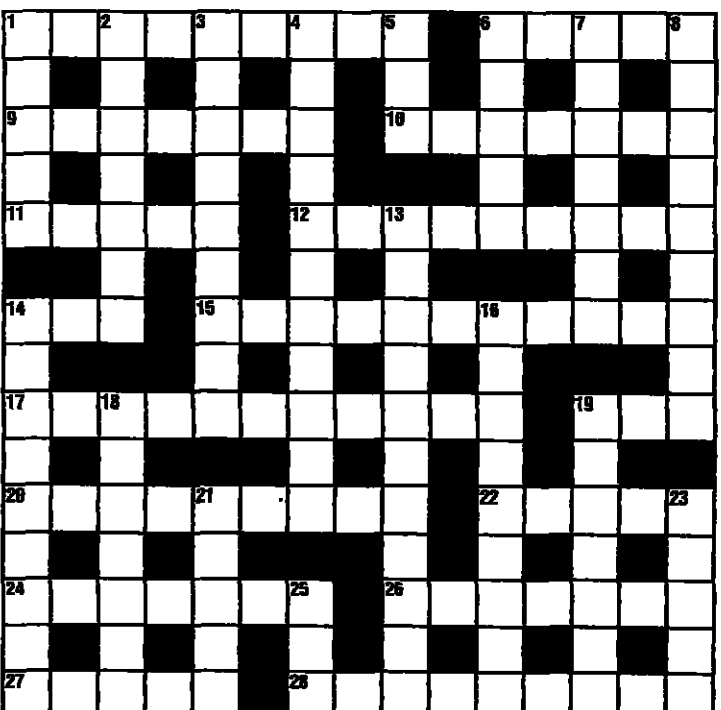
IN THE TIMES

BOOKS
The ocean explorer Robert Ballard (left) on the Atlantic depths; Peter Ackroyd on W.B. Yeats

FILMS
Geoff Brown's verdict on Oscar nominee *The English Patient*



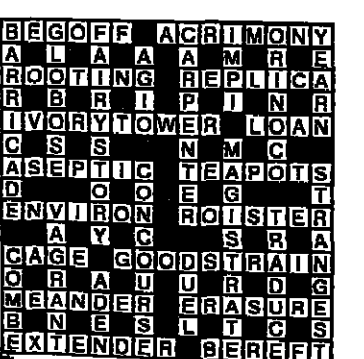
THE TIMES CROSSWORD NO 20,425



ACROSS

- 1 Bolted many together? (9)
- 6 Blame one laid on head of Dean Swift (5)
- 9 Has prep to revise, maybe (7)
- 10 Pelt American all round the ring - that's sickening (7)
- 11 He splits a couple of poles made of wood (5)
- 12 Having no remedy, suffer before getting island retreat (9)
- 14 Margaret turned to stone (3)
- 15 Exact monies may be needed for these (6,5)
- 17 Dictator hated for ill-treatment (5,6)
- 19 Not happy with some gratuitous advice (3)
- 20 In love and caring fantastically - it's a sort of chemistry (9)
- 22 In principle, ring after eleven in the morning (5)
- 24 One drunk turns to spy another (7)

Solution to Puzzle No 20,424



DOWN

- 2 In entering new trade, one should be (7)
- 27 For hazardous runs, I hit ball in air (5)
- 28 The farthest one can get from a bank (9)
- 1 Copies sent up, including one in colour (5)
- 2 People's leader, such as Lincoln (7)
- 3 Simple difference of opinion, but he goes to court (9)
- 4 Honour saint at home, in a manner of speaking (11)
- 5 Note in sound money (3)
- 6 Condition under which a horse races (5)
- 7 Weak case made for charitable collection (4,3)
- 8 Deal out two of diamonds and two of spades - needs shuffle (9)
- 13 Agreed about a spiteful woman being involved (11)
- 14 Ring-fighter is happy to, in the fresh air (9)
- 16 She might well make man target (9)
- 18 More than one player is in new boots (7)
- 19 Elegant French female (7)
- 21 Traveller has a lot of discomfort on yacht (5)
- 23 Lady in Mother's Union (5)
- 25 Queen's consort (3)

Times Two Crossword, page 48

AA INFORMATION

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HIGHEST & LOWEST

Yesterday's highest & lowest temperatures:
Denbighshire, 20C (68F); Lowest day max:
Clacton-on-Sea, Essex, 5C (41F); Highest rainfall:
Clacton, 0.0cm; Highest sunshine: Jersey, 10.1hr

NEWSPAPERS SUPPORT RECYCLING

Recycled paper made up 41.2% of the raw material for UK newspapers in the first half of 1996

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FORECAST

General: throughout England and Wales the morning will again be settled, with mist or dense fog mainly in the east. Mist should clear during the day and many places will be sunny. In the North it may become cloudier, perhaps with a little rain, but later it should again be dry and bright.

Eastern and central Scotland may have a misty start. This will clear during the morning as cloud and outbreaks of showery rain cross from Northern Ireland, but later, away from the west, it will again be dry and bright.

London, SE England, E Anglia, Central S England, E Midlands, W Midlands: misty start, fog in places, clearing; sunny periods by afternoon. Winds light, southerly. Warm. Max 16C (61F).

E England, Central N England, NE England: mist or fog clearing, sunny periods; cloudier, isolated showers for a time, then brighter again later. Winds light, southerly. Warm. Max 15C (59F).

Channel Isles, SW England, S Wales, N Wales: misty on coasts, clearing inland, some sunshine; cloudier for a time then brighter later. Winds light, southerly. Warm. Max 14C (57F).

NW England, Lake District, Isle of Man, N Ireland: misty at first, clearing, then bright or sunny, clouding over with showers for a time, clearing later. Winds light, southerly. Warm. Max 14C (57F).

Borders, Edinburgh & Dundee, Central Highlands, Moray Firth: misty in places, clearing, sunny periods, then showers; dry again later. Winds light, southwest. Mild. Max 13C (55F).

Aberdeen, SW Scotland, Glasgow, NE Scotland, Argyll, NW Scotland, Orkney, Shetland: cloudy, rain or showers. Winds southerly, light or moderate. Mild. Max 11C (52F).

Outlook: bright, ahead of cloud and patchy rain spreading from the west.

AROUND BRITAIN YESTERDAY

24 hrs to 5 pm: b=bright; c=cloud; d=drizzle; de=dust storm; du=dust; f=fair; lg=log; g=gale; h=halt; r=rain; sh=showers; s=sleet; sn=snow; s=sun; t=thunder

Sun Rain Max Min

Aberdeen 8.3 16.6 15.1 14.1

Angus 8.3 16.6 15.1 14.1

Armagh 8.3 16.6 15.1 14.1

Armagh 8.3 16.6 15.1 14.1

Armagh 8.3 16.6 15.1 14.1

Armagh 8.3 16.6 15.1 14.1

Armagh 8.3 16.6 15.1 14.1

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Armagh 8.3 16.6 15.1 14.1

Armagh 8.3 16.6 15.1 14.1

Armagh 8.3 16.6 15.1 14.1

NOON TODAY

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INSIDE SECTION

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The two British architects who are bridging the world
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SPORT

Make a Stand's win at Cheltenham costs
Pipe family dear
PAGES 42-48

TELEVISION AND RADIO

PAGES 46, 47

WEDNESDAY MARCH 12 1997

Former Barings chief removed from SFA register and ordered to pay costs

Hopkins 'not fit to be director'



Hopkins: rejects findings

By ROBERT MILLER

A CITY watchdog yesterday imposed one of the stiffest penalties yet on a Barings executive charged with supervising Nick Leeson's rogue trades on the Far East money markets.

The Securities and Futures Authority (SFA), the regulator for brokers and futures traders, declared that Ian Hopkins, the former head of group treasury and risk at the merchant bank, had "ceased to be a fit and proper person to be registered with the SFA as a director". Mr Hopkins was removed from the register of directors for a period of at

least three years and ordered to pay £10,000 towards costs.

Mr Hopkins, who "totally" rejected the SFA's findings and said he regretted "the gratuitously vindictive terms in which they are expressed", is one of only two former Barings' directors to be declared not "fit and proper". The other executive to suffer a similar stigma was Geoffrey Broadhurst, previously head of group finance.

The SFA took the unprecedented step of issuing a six-page notice of the disciplinary proceedings against Mr Hopkins, including a summary of the tribunal findings against him. The former Barings di-

rector, who also faces court action by the Department of Trade and Industry to have him disqualified from acting as a company director, did not attend the three-day tribunal hearing in January, and did not submit a defence. Mr Broadhurst suffered the same "not fit and proper" person ruling because he ignored the SFA procedures altogether.

The City watchdog decided that Mr Hopkins should be the subject of a tribunal hearing, rather than an arbitrary ruling, because he had written numerous letters to the SFA setting out his position. He also made a number of public statements and gave evidence

to the Commons Treasury Select Committee.

The SFA has now disciplined nine former Barings directors who did nothing to stem the bank's capital flowing out to support Leeson's trades. All the SFA prosecutions in the Barings affair have now been concluded except the case of Ron Baker who is appealing against a reprimand and an order to pay £7,500 in costs.

Mr Hopkins has been regarded as the "whistleblower" in the Barings case for the memos he wrote and the issues he raised about the continuous cash calls. He said the SFA had failed to note that

as a result of the concerns he raised within the bank, and outside, he was dismissed from the Barings Investment Banking Group Management Committee on February 21 1995, just days before Britain's oldest merchant bank crashed with debts of £830 million.

But Nick Durlacher, chairman of the SFA, challenged the perception of Mr Hopkins as a "whistleblower". He said: "An impartial tribunal has scrupulously considered all the available evidence and judged that Mr Hopkins did not 'blow the whistle' with any clarity, force or urgency. On the contrary, the tribunal found that his actions fell far

short of the standards expected of a prudent man in such a senior position."

In reply, Mr Hopkins, quoting from the Singapore Inspectors' report into the crash, said: "Given the nature of the points that were raised by Mr Hopkins and the terms in which they were presented, we do not believe that Mr Hopkins's concerns were accorded the serious responses they deserved. In our view, the collapse might have been averted if Mr Hopkins's concerns had been taken seriously, and acted upon promptly and effectively."

Pennington, page 27

NatWest set to cut bonus payments after inquiry

By ROBERT MILLER, BANKING CORRESPONDENT

SENIOR NatWest managers responsible for supervising the derivatives trading of Kyriacos Papouis, which led to the bank writing-off £50 million, are expected to have their bonuses cut when the results of an internal investigation are announced tomorrow.

The conclusion of the NatWest inquiry, conducted with Coopers & Lybrand, the accountant, and Linklaters & Paines, the City law firm, is also expected to lead to the departure of a number of senior managers in the interest rate options department at NatWest Markets.

Last night NatWest said: "The results of the inquiry may have a financial impact on certain individuals."

In common with most banks, broking houses and fund managers, NatWest pays part of its bonuses in cash, usually at the end of January, with a second tranche deferred until later in the financial year, or even longer in some cases.

It is the second part of the bonus that NatWest could claw back, but only from the handful of senior supervisors that work in the interest rate options arm. Other traders in NatWest Markets are not expected to be penalised.

Neil Dodgson, a senior NatWest trader, is at present suspended from his job "for failure to supervise, pending the conclusion of an internal inquiry". Further up the NatWest supervisory chain is Jean-Francois Nguyen, who is managing director of the interest rate market.

The NatWest inquiry, the results of which are expected to be passed to the Bank of England and to the Securities and Futures Authority (SFA), the watchdog for bro-

kers and futures dealers, is believed to have uncovered serious gaps in the department's risk-measuring computer programmes.

Mr Papouis, who left NatWest last December for Bears Stearns, a US securities house from which he has now resigned, was a relatively junior trader. To date there appears to be no evidence to suggest that his dealings or "mispricing errors" in the interest rate options market were done for personal gain.

What does seem to have been established, however, is that NatWest's risk models, which are computer based, were not fed with accurate information that would enable the overly risky exposures to be detected. Market observers say that in the recent past NatWest has built up its position "very aggressively" in certain trading areas.

This year NatWest Markets has been recruiting experienced risk managers, and this is believed to have been at the instigation of Chip Kruger and Gary Holloway, the joint heads of NatWest's global debt markets operations. Mr Kruger and Mr Holloway took up their positions at the start of the year. Both came from Greenwich Capital, the US fixed-income firm bought by NatWest last October.

The Bank of England, which is the prudential supervisor of the NatWest banking group, is responsible for the direct supervision of London's capital markets. The Bank has already begun a preliminary investigation into the NatWest losses in conjunction with the SFA, which polices the registration of individual traders and their supervisors and senior managers.

Pennington, page 27



Bright note: Michael Bright, left, chief executive of Independent Insurance, and Garth Ramsey, chairman, reported a 46 per cent advance in 1996 pre-tax profits but said that market conditions remained difficult. The company is a sponsor of the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra. Page 26

Scotia shares tumble after drug setback

By PAUL DURMAN

SCOTIA HOLDINGS, one of the UK's largest biotechnology companies, lost nearly a quarter of its stock market value yesterday when it announced a serious setback with one of its most important drugs.

Scotia has been unable to convince the UK's Medicines Control Agency that Tarabatic is an effective treatment for diabetes.

Erling Refsum, the Yamachi analyst who has been one of Scotia's biggest City supporters, said: "By the look of it, [Tarabatic's] a wipe-out. They don't believe the results. The knock-on effect is that it calls into question Scotia's whole ability to run trials."

Scotia shares fell 135p, to 435p, cutting the company's market capitalisation by more than £100 million.

Scotia had been hoping to launch Tarabatic later this year.

Zeneca to expand US salesforce as profits top £1bn

By PAUL DURMAN

ZENECA, the pharmaceuticals group, will this year expand its US salesforce from 1,200 to nearly 2,000 to support the launch of its strong portfolio of new drugs in the largest healthcare market.

The rapidly rising sales of new drugs such as Cavoxol (for prostate cancer), Arimidex (breast cancer) and Accolate (asthma) was again a key feature of Zeneca's full-year results yesterday. Zeneca said products launched within the last two years were responsible for 40 per cent of the volume growth in pharmaceuticals last year and were already responsible for 5 per cent of the division's £2.4 billion of sales.

A strong performance from pharmaceuticals enabled Zeneca to increase pre-tax profits, before a £30 million loss on

disposals, by 15 per cent to a record of just over £1 billion. Group sales rose 9 per cent to £5.4 billion.

After hitting a new peak in early trading, Zeneca's shares fell back 42p to end the day at £18.60. Nick Woolf, a Nomura analyst, expressed concern that Zeneca's drug pipeline may begin to look "a tad weak" after the forthcoming launch of Seroquel, a treatment for schizophrenia. He suggested the company may find it difficult to achieve its target of annual earnings growth of 15 per cent a year over the next five years.

Sir David Barnes, chief executive, said Zeneca's pipeline remained strong, with 18 potential new products under development, excluding those such as Seroquel that only await regulatory approval.

Sir David also said that Zeneca's share price - which has more than trebled since it was demerged from ICI four years ago - was justified by the fundamentals of the group's business.

Sir David said the company expects by the end of the month to resolve the problems at its Macclesfield plant that makes the top-selling Zoladex for prostate cancer. The plant was recently criticised by the US Food and Drug Administration.

Zeneca's agrochemicals division improved its operating profits by 18 per cent to £227 million on sales 12 per cent higher at nearly £1.7 billion.

The company will pay a second interim dividend of 22.5p on May 6. This will increase the full-year dividend by 13 per cent to 35p a share.

Tempus, page 28

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Redrow chief to make £91m

By GAVIN LUMSDEN



Morgan: beat the recession

STEVE MORGAN, who once earned a living digging drains in Liverpool, is set to raise £91.5 million by selling shares in Redrow Group, the housebuilder of which he is chairman.

Mr Morgan, who ran the company from a makeshift office in his bedroom when it was founded in the early 1970s, yesterday announced plans to sell a 25 per cent stake in Redrow to institutional investors. He retains a 35 per cent interest worth about £130 million. The company came to the stock market in 1994. Mr Morgan said he was reducing his shareholding pri-

marily for family investment reasons, adding: "It is not really appropriate for a listed public company to have 50 per cent of its shares held by one owner." He said: "I wanted to sell more at the time of the float, but conditions in the housebuilding industry then did not really allow it."

Mr Morgan holds the shares through Bridgmore Holdings, a company which holds assets on behalf of his family. Mr Morgan still runs the St David's Hotel and golf course near Clwyd, which he transferred from Redrow for

£100 prior to its flotation. Mr Morgan is credited as one of the few housebuilders to call correctly the top of the housing market in 1988 and 1989, selling the company's entire landbank before the recession and the housing crash hit the whole sector.

Yesterday Redrow reported a £4.3 million rise in pre-tax profits to £16.4 million for the six months to December 31 on sales that rose 29 per cent to £123 million. Earnings rose 1.3p to 5.2p a share. The interim dividend is lifted to 1.2p a share from 1.1p.

Tempus, page 28

Wall St brokers set \$31bn record

FROM RICHARD THOMSON
IN NEW YORK

SOARING stock markets, mergers and acquisitions and new share issues pushed the revenues of Wall Street's brokerage houses to a record \$31.4 billion in the final quarter of last year.

The total beat the previous record of \$30.5 billion, set in the second quarter of last year. However, some brokers worry about how long the unprecedented surge could last. "It seems like it's almost too good to be true," said one senior Wall Street executive. "We're praying it isn't the pride before the fall."

Net profits leapt to a record \$11.27 billion, a huge rise of 31 per cent over the previous quarterly profit record of \$8.6 billion, set in 1993.

The figures are compiled by the Securities Industry Association, the US industry trade body. Employment in the securities industry rose to 265,000, a rise of 3.5 per cent on the 1995 level. It has now surpassed the number employed in the industry in the weeks before the stock market crash of October 1987, which is making some Wall Street veterans nervous. "As long as the stock market keeps climbing, we're safe," said one. "After that, it may be every man for himself."

Although initial public share offerings have fallen in volume in recent weeks, the market at the end of last year was running at record levels, with \$50 billion raised in 1996. Merger and acquisition deals also beat all previous records, with more than \$500 billion in completed deals in the year. The pay of senior Wall Street brokers also reached record levels, reflecting the huge profits.

John Mack, president of Morgan Stanley, saw his pay jump 58 per cent, to \$10.5 million. Richard Fuld, chairman of Lehman Brothers, had a 34 per cent rise, to \$6.67 million. Merrill Lynch last week said that Daniel Tully, its chairman, was paid \$11.1 million, up 42 per cent.



Hans Snook, left, group managing director, and Graham Howe increased spending at Orange to £220 million

Ring of confidence as Orange losses deepen

BY CHRISTINE BUCKLEY, INDUSTRIAL CORRESPONDENT

LOSSES at Orange, the mobile phone operator, deepened to £229 million last year as the company's large investment programme bit further into its balance sheet.

The losses increased from £141 million in 1995, although the figure was largely in line with the City's estimates. Orange's spending grew to £220 million, from £188 million.

But the company, which is not expected to move into the black until next year or 1999, said it was confident about the mobile phone market in the UK, predicting that one in five people will have a portable phone by the year 2000. It currently stands at one in ten.

Orange, which floated last year, has lifted its market share from 7 per cent to 11.5 per cent.

The company is committed to heavy investment in the race for subscribers in the competitive mobile phone market. While Orange gets £442 a year from its average customer, it has to spend £278 to win a customer. The spend goes on providing the phones at the nominal costs needed to woo new subscribers and on giving incentives to the mobile phone sales networks and shops.

The company is confident that the retained revenue from customers will rise after BT last month raised the price of a call from its fixed line to an

Orange phone. Last year it dipped slightly from 1995's level of £444 per customer.

Although the spend on attracting subscribers is high, Orange says it has been successful in clinging on to those customers.

The mobile phone market is subject to a high level of "churn" — customers who enrol with one provider and then quickly move on to another. Orange said its churn rate for last year was 18.6 per cent compared with an industry average of 28 per cent.

Graham Howe, group finance director, said the churn rate meant that Orange was hanging on to its customers for an average of five years

while the industry average meant its rivals had customer loyalty for about three and a half years.

Beyond the millennium Orange believes ownership of mobile phones could stretch to two in five people. Such a take-up would put the UK further in line with other countries such as the Scandinavian countries, which average 30 per cent ownership.

But fears over what is really to be won in the competitive market has suppressed Orange's shares.

Last March the company floated at 205p a share and then saw a slump in the price to 157p. Yesterday the price moved up 5p to 219p.

Petrol price war takes toll of Frost

BY CARL MORTIMER

FROST GROUP, the independent petrol retailing group, has seen its petrol retailing chain almost halved in size as a result of the petrol price war.

The owner of the Save petrol brand lost 530 sites last year, reducing the number of outlets to 614 at the end of December. The cuts in Frost Group, whose chairman is James Frost, coincide with a squeeze on independent dealers as the large oil companies and hypermarkets continue their campaign of low petrol prices.

Some 1,500 dealers went bust or quit the market last year, according to figures from the Institute of Petroleum's Retail Marketing Survey.

The vast majority of these are independents, reflecting the hardship faced by small operators.

Frost Group, which publishes its 1996 financial results



James Frost: sites halved

next week, adopted a strategy of maintaining its margins in the face of discounting by the majors. It acquired more than 800 dealer sites from Burnham Castrol in June 1995, only months before Esso launched its Pricewise campaign.

Out of fuel, page 29

Firms unite for software challenge

IN the most serious challenge yet to Microsoft's dominance of the world software market, several of America's largest computer companies have joined forces to produce a new software standard for computing (Richard Thomson writes).

The companies, which include IBM, Oracle, Sun Microsystems and Netscape Communications, have agreed on specifications that will allow different computers with different software to operate with each other.

The aim is to gain broad industry acceptance of the new standards. "This initiative starts with four companies, but our goal is for an industry groundswell to develop," said Steve Mills, general manager of IBM's software division. Wide-spread acceptance could substantially undermine Microsoft's stranglehold.

Watt to place 25% of EFM's shares

BY GAVIN LUMSDEN

LAIN WATT, chief executive of Edinburgh Fund Managers (EFM), is seeking to place nearly one quarter of the company's shares this week after the decision by British Coal Pension Schemes (BCPS) to sell its stake in the British Investment Trust.

Mr Watt has appointed HSBC James Capel, Panmure Gordon, Schroders and Flemings to dispose of around 7.6 million of its ordinary shares and is proposing to buy back a further 2.6 million (8 per cent) at the placing price by Friday.

The move ends four months of talks between EFM and BCPS, which is managed by Goldman Sachs. The pension fund controlled 32.5 per cent of the fund manager's equity via its 85 per cent stake in the £1 billion British Investment Trust (BIT).

BIT has stood at an average

discount of 15.7 per cent for the past year. It will now be liquidated and its other investors given the chance to enter a new unit trust.

Although it reduces EFM's funds under management to £6.5 billion and could hit earnings per share by removing £26 million of management fees, analysts believe the placing is a good defensive move. Mr Watt said: "I am delighted with the deal, which makes us a truly independent fund management company. We can now focus solely on growing the business."

Although turnover rose 59 per cent to £31.1 million, pre-tax profit after exceptional items was down £200,000 to £12.6 million. Earnings fell from 42.3p a share to 40.2p. EFM is paying an unchanged final dividend of 17p, maintaining the total at 25p.

BUSINESS ROUNDUP

Britton Group beats a dip in demand

BRITTON GROUP, the plastics and packaging group whose customers include Heinz, Kraft and Pillsbury, shrugged off weaker demand and currency fluctuations to lift its pre-tax profits by 5 per cent, to £21.6 million, in the year to December 31. Operating profits on continuing activities rose by 7.3 per cent, to £23.9 million. Exceptional costs of £1.2 million arose largely from restructuring within the plastics division. Britton is paying a final dividend of 1.98p to give a total for the year of 3.3p, up 10 per cent. Earnings per share were 10.8p, up from 10.18p.

Lloyd's insolvency test

INVESTORS in the Lloyd's of London insurance market face a new solvency test designed to pinpoint shortfalls at an early stage. Corporate and private names will have to show that they can cover a sum over and above their total liabilities. Lloyd's already has to satisfy two separate solvency tests each year. The DTT said that the new test will show investors how much Lloyd's is relying on its own central fund to maintain solvency. A Lloyd's spokesman said it would not discourage private names.

DBS seeks full listing

DBS Management, Britain's largest network of independent financial advisers, is to reapply for a full Stock Exchange listing after being cleared by the Personal Investment Authority of allegations of compliance breaches made by Kenneth Stead, a former director, in October. DBS is listed on the AIM, with a market capitalisation of £61 million. The company is buying Assurance, a computer software provider, for £2 million. DBS said that the acquisition would save costs in developing electronic trading for its 1,650 member firms.

Guinness Peat leaps

GUINNESS PEAT, the merchant bank, reported a 30 per cent increase in net profits to £19.1 million for the year to December. The result reflected the sale of shares in Physicians Insurance to reduce exposure to the US market, as well as settlement of outstanding litigation. The group is to make a one-for-ten bonus share issue in conjunction with a final dividend equivalent to 0.25p per share. The bank is considering proposals to reduce the number of shares in issue and will make a recommendation to shareholders in due course.

Rise in business failures

INSOLVENCIES in Germany grew at more than 15 per cent last year, the fastest rate of increase across Europe, according to Dun & Bradstreet, the business information company. Overall, corporate insolvencies across 14 countries rose 6.5 per cent to 207,000 companies over the year. In Germany, the 25,900 business failures carried with them a total cost to the economy of around DM80 billion. Dun & Bradstreet estimated. Insolvency rates in France and Britain were high, at 64,000 and 41,100 respectively.

Building orders dip

NEW orders in Britain's construction industry fell in January compared with the previous month. Over the three months to January, orders were down 1 per cent compared with the same period a year ago, but 8 per cent up compared with the three months from August to October last year, according to the Department of the Environment. New orders in the private housing sector in the three months from November to January were 13 per cent higher than the previous three months and 40 per cent higher than a year ago.

Schools boost BPP

AN IMPROVED performance by its language schools division helped BPP, the education group, to lift 1996 pre-tax profits 14 per cent, to £9.75 million. Sales rose 15 per cent, to £76 million. Earnings per share rose by 17 per cent, to 22.9p. Profits of the language division, which includes Linguarama, rose by two thirds, to £1.45 million, but Richard Price, chairman, said that UK courses will cost foreign students more if sterling rises higher. A 9p final dividend makes 13p, up 16 per cent.

Cussins raises payout

CUSSINS PROPERTY GROUP, the North East housebuilder, achieved an 11 per cent rise in pre-tax profits to £1.9 million in 1996, despite the absence of a £5 million Ministry of Defence deal that lifted profits in 1995. Turnover rose 9 per cent to £26.7 million, with a 37 per cent leap in housebuilding to £26.1 million and a 28 per cent jump in sales to a record 353 units. Earnings were 8.8p a share (8.7p). The dividend is increased 5 per cent to 4.1p, with a 2.65p final.

Hozelock buys Cyprio

HOZELOCK, the garden products company, has bought Cyprio, a garden pond filtration manufacturer, for £5.8 million. Cyprio was established in 1983 to market a broad range of aquatic products for domestic use. The business, based near Peterborough, has a staff of 50 and markets its clear water filtration systems in Britain, continental Europe and the US. In the year to November 30, 1996 it had sales of £4.7 million and made a pre-tax profit of £621,000.

Sims shows error loss

SIMS FOOD has called in an independent firm of accountants after it uncovered a breakdown of financial controls at its plant in Carnaby, Yorkshire. The company said management accounts may have overstated profits by up to £1.7 million in respect of the year to March 31, 1997, leading to losses of up to £1.5 million. Directors do not expect the group's operating results to differ materially from market expectations. Sims added. The shares fell 2 1/2 p to 30 1/2 p.

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Irish loans concern grows

THE Irish Auctioneers and Valuers Institute has joined the steadily growing list of groups expressing concern over the mortgage-lending practices of financial institutions in the Republic of Ireland (Eileen McCabe writes).

The institute said yesterday it had heard reports that some

banks and building societies are relaxing their rules so that young people, particularly professionals entering the job market, can get a mortgage. Their comments follow last week's warning from the Minister for Finance, Ruairi Quinn, that lending institutions should exercise prudence

in their mortgage decisions in a booming housing market.

Traditionally Irish institutions have used conservative criteria, lending only 2.5 times the borrower's annual salary. In recent months, however, there have been persistent rumours, particularly in Dublin, that some have begun to bend those rules.

Denials from financial institutions have done little to quell fears that the property market in Dublin, fuelled by irresponsible borrowing, is beginning to share some of the characteristics of the pre-crash property market in London in the late Eighties.

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□ Labour may ditch Oprafr chief □ Europe reverses stance on jobs □ Barings 'whistleblower' takes the blame

Why 'red' may signal 'go'

□ SPLENDID news! Help is at hand for our embattled railways franchising director, who is suffering so grievously at the hands of Stagecoach. Poor John O'Brien, who runs the Office of Passenger Rail Franchising (Oprafr) and is charged with ensuring all those tiresome railway timetables are kept to, is widely thought to be one of the first public servants out of a job should Labour win the election.

But Mr O'Brien may be able to stay on after all. What he has to do, and this is radical stuff, be warned, is carry out his obligations as enshrined in the 1993 Railways Act. Easy, really. It might even help those Times readers in the South East staring into the mist this morning in the faint hope of spotting a train.

Yesterday this column questioned whether Mr O'Brien lacked the authority to do his job, or was simply not prepared to. Let us assume he is quite keen to give those rail operators whose franchises he has arranged a hard time when they fail. Let us assume he has merely mislaid the means.

They are to be found in section 55 of the above act. Oprafr has so far indicated it will levy fairly low fines for the failings of South West Trains, namely widespread cancellations that will run until Easter at least.

But section 55 offers the

franchising director far more draconian powers. He can make an order requiring them to carry out steps to comply with their duties — rehiring all those sacked drivers until their replacements are trained, in South West's case. If this is not done to the letter, fines are unlimited. The sequence continues: loss of the franchise, injunctions from the courts, contempt of court, more fines, jail...

This is a defining moment in rail privatisation, because there are signs that other operators around the country are thinking about their own unilateral amendments to their franchise promises. They must have taken comfort from the self-satisfied bleating we heard from someone called John Watts, apparently the Rail Minister, in the Commons on Monday.

Oprafr claims to be aware of section 55, but says there is not enough evidence to say if South West is in breach. The figures are not yet analysed for February; they will not be until the end of next week, that is, nearly April. The operator then has 28 days to comply with any performance

order. Only after that, says Oprafr, is there a possibility of fines. If breaches continue. Nothing else we can do.

So you are allowed the best part of three months to run a lousy service, and fines that are not even retrospective. That is how the regulations are configured, says Oprafr. Things may be different in future. If Labour gets in, it has said that it views regulation as the heart of its control of the railways — this is made clear in the Railtrack prospectus. By then Mr O'Brien may have made an abrupt career change. Director of regulation at Stagecoach, perhaps?

Contracting out of your responsibilities

□ THOSE who believe the legal mills in Europe grind exceedingly slowly will be surprised to learn that yesterday's ruling on the status of contract workers represents a complete about-face in only three years. The attempt to protect the rights of employees when their jobs are transferred to outside contractors was al-



ways a right too far. Now the EU has managed to renege and save its energies for more winnable battles, such as the working time directive.

Several German cleaning ladies have trooped through the European Court to help Brussels clarify its mind on the matter. It had been assumed that if you take on a business, you take on its employees, their rights and the cost of paying them off if you no longer need them. This was a distinct bar to outsourcing, a quaint euphemism for a business that we British are rather good at: indeed, firms such as Capita and Serco Group have made their fortunes from it.

There is only one reason to outsource, putting some of the

work now done in-house in the hands of an outside contractor, and that is to save money. There are really only two ways of doing this, too. You work people harder or you pay them less — ideally both, if you can get away with it.

The real savings come in transferring public sector work, where uneconomic practices are protected by public sector unions, into the private sector.

The European Court judgment significantly weakens the EU's Acquired Rights Directive, by saying new employers are not necessarily required to take on existing staff. Just who they are obliged to take will now have to be clearly defined by both parties, and reflected in the price at which the work is put out to tender. It does not strip hundreds of thousands of service workers of their rights. But it could throw up a problem for outsourcing businesses whose contracts come up for renewal.

The EU had to backtrack because its initial stance negated the whole purpose of contracting out in the first place. It had precious little to do with the operation of a single market and

more with knee-jerk regulation-setting at Brussels, too. Not for the first time, and not for the last, one might think.

One law for the bolshie

□ CITY justice seems as subjective in the era of the bureaucratic self-regulatory organisation as in the days of the club blackball. Ian Hopkins, treasury and risk manager at Barings, thinks himself a virtuous whistleblower, who tried to warn top Barings directors of the dangers building up in Singapore, but was sat on for his pains.

Others disagree. Among them is the Securities and Futures Authority, which concluded that Mr Hopkins should have acted faster and more effectively. It is not the first time that a referee has disagreed with a player angrily protesting his innocence.

What seems odd is that Mr Hopkins should receive as severe an official punishment as anyone at Barings save the incarcerated Nick Leeson. Along with being given a three-year ban from

senior City jobs and a £10,000 charge, he is unusually also named as not being a fit and proper person in SFA terms.

The reason for this appears to be that, out of foolish pride, Mr Hopkins refused to co-operate with the SFA investigation of his case. No real transgression incenses petty bureaucrats in professional bodies as much as someone challenging their authority or ignoring their letters.

Had Mr Hopkins copped a plea, he claims, he would have got off with a reprimand and a £5,000 fine. Either investors would have been left unprotected in that event, or Mr Hopkins is now being punished for his pride rather than for any benefit of the financial markets. How interesting to see what penal standard will apply at NatWest.

... No pack drill

□ SPEAKING of NatWest, it was amazing, when a £50 million hole appeared two weeks ago, how quickly senior names who had been preening themselves at the company's results briefing days before dropped below the parapet. It was left to anonymous spokespeople to reassure the market. When NatWest's own internal report is published today or tomorrow, we at least expect some very important people to stand up in public.

Cowie rules out bid for whole of Underground

BY FRASER NELSON

COWIE, the car leasing and bus operating group, yesterday ruled itself out as a bidder for London Underground, but said it may be interested in parts of the network it segmented.

The company, which is already the largest bus operator in the capital, said that the amount of money needed to bid for the Underground as a whole was prohibitive.

Gordon Hodgson, chief executive, said: "We would never bid for the whole system, and would not even give this a second thought. It is much bigger than anything we would want to tackle. But if it were segmented, we might consider it."

His comments came as the company returned pre-tax

profits of £81.2 million last year, a 46 per cent increase on the previous year, after a £30.4 million contribution from its bus operations.

Its four London bus routes increased profits by 49 per cent to £14.9 million over the year, after an increase in margins, bus fares and passenger volume.

However, its car leasing division returned profits of £34.8 million against the expected £37 million, which caused some concern among analysts, who downgraded forecasts for this year from £107 million to £102 million.

Mr Hodgson said that the leasing division was suffering from a "mild depression" because fewer customers had returned cars from the three-

year leases. He said: "It's a cyclical business. There are not as many cars coming back now, but this will correct itself later on." He said the company was adding 9,000 cars to its 74,000-strong fleet this year, and would continue to add as many as cashflow allowed.

Profits at its bus dealership rose 4 per cent to £3.1 million on turnover that was flat at £24.7 million (£24.5 million). Mr Hodgson said the division would not reach "break-through point" for another three years, when orders from bus operators would allow the company the purchasing power to command better prices from manufacturers.

The company intends to spend £55 million on about

600 new buses this year, which will take its overall fleet to 7,200. Most of this will be spent on British Buses, bought last August.

Mr Hodgson said the company would continue to pour more money into its new bus routes. "We have three years of heavy spending in front of us," he said. While the acquisition is still being scrutinised by the Department of Trade and Industry, Mr Hodgson said that he was hoping for a result in "weeks rather than months".

Earnings increased to 33.2p (26.2p) a share. The total dividend rises to 12.4p (10.4p), with a final 4p payable on April 25.

Tempus, page 28

Harrisons cautious on outlook

HARRISONS & Crossfield, the industrial conglomerate, struck a cautious note yesterday as it reported a marginal rise in profits last year (Sarah Cunningham writes).

In the 12 months to December 31, pre-tax profit rose to £120.8 million (£119.6 million). The company said that in the first two months of the current year profits from food and agriculture were running well behind last year. This is partly because of the strength of sterling, which is also having an impact on its chemicals business. Chemicals are nonetheless delivering better operating profits than last year.

Earnings per share were 11.1p (11p) and the final dividend is being maintained at 5.4p. It is payable on July 1 and gives an unchanged full-year dividend of 9p a share.

Yorkshire would seek big premium from Granada

BY ALASDAIR MURRAY

WARD THOMAS, chairman and chief executive of Yorkshire Tyne Tees Television, said yesterday that any bid made by Granada would need to carry a hefty premium to the current share price.

Granada owns 27 per cent of YTTT and Gerry Robinson, chairman, has made no secret of the company's desire to launch a full bid. United News and Media, which has a 14 per cent stake in YTTT, is another potential bidder.

Shares in Yorkshire have risen by around 80 per cent in recent months. They closed unchanged last night at 1,247.5p, valuing the company at £800 million. Mr Thomas believes an offer would need to be pitched at around £17 a share.

YTTT yesterday reported a 40 per cent rise in full-year profits to £30.2 million. Pro-



Thomas: premium needed

gramme revenues increased 9 per cent, while costs remained steady despite a rise in output. Advertising revenue disappointed, with sales falling to 10.3 per cent of total ITV advertising revenue, at £12 million, below expectations. YTTT blamed a cutback in spending by one major adver-

tiser, while southern regions benefited from strong growth in telecommunications advertising.

The company predicted an improvement this year and has set a target of 10.9 per cent of total revenue, with income growing by 5 per cent in the first quarter.

YTTT is concentrating on expanding its programme making operations. It recently opened a new studio in Leeds, which at 24,000 sq ft is the largest in the country.

Emmerdale was the fastest growing programme in the soap category last year, the show ranking among ITV's top ten, while A Touch of Frost and Heartbeat were also very successful.

Turnover rose by 3 per cent to £271 million. The total dividend was increased by 29 per cent to 18p. A final dividend of 11.2p is payable on May 13.

Kalon's return to black paints brighter picture

BY CLARE STEWART

KALON, the UK's largest producer of paint, revealed yesterday that its merger with Euridep, the French group, will produce significantly larger benefits than expected. Announcing year-end results, Mike Hennessy, group managing director, said "the recurring benefits from merging Kalon and Euridep in 1995 will be £23.5 million in a full year". This compares with the £10 million expected at the time of the merger.

Integration of the two groups to date has involved closure of offices and plants in the UK and France and a total of 600 job losses. Further restructuring measures are planned in 1997 and substantial reorganisation benefits are still to come through.

Results for the year to December 31 came in at the top end of City forecasts. After exceptional costs, Kalon reported pre-tax profits of £19.3 million, compared with a £3 million loss. Turnover increased 40.3 per cent to £525 million, reflecting a full year's contribution from Euridep.

Analysts have increased their forecast for this year and are looking for pre-tax profits of £46 million. The final dividend is lifted to 3.5p, giving a total of 5.2p for the year.



Mike Hennessy said the merger exceeded expectations

BBA will spend £80m in search of growth

BY ALASDAIR MURRAY

BBA GROUP, the engineering and materials company, has said it will double its investment spend to £80 million this year as it concentrates on organic growth.

The company unveiled a 19 per cent increase in full-year pre-tax profits to £141 million, excluding exceptional items.

Roberto Quarta, chief executive, said that the group is committed to growth through investment in new products and technologies. He added that with an improved balance of businesses, the company is well positioned to benefit from future opportunities.

BBA also announced the purchase of Korma, an Italian materials company, for up to £12 million and the signing of a joint venture friction materials deal in China.

Overall turnover fell 7 per cent to £1.1 billion after a series of disposals. Turnover on continuing operations increased 10 per cent to £1.05 billion.

The transportation division increased profits in continuing businesses by 16 per cent to £38 million. The company said that the benefits of restructuring in the friction materials business should show through this year.

The industrial division increased profits in continuing businesses by a third to £88 million.

Year-end gearing, following capital expenditure of £45 million, was 4 per cent. The total dividend was increased 17 per cent to 7p. A final dividend of 4.9p is payable on May 28.

Tempus, page 28

Sweet performance at Thorntons

A STRONG performance from its new-look stores propelled Thorntons, the chocolate and confectionery retailer, to a 30 per cent rise in profits at the halfway stage (Sarah Cunningham writes).

In the six months to January 11, pre-tax profits rose from

£7.6 million to £9.9 million. Earnings were 30.5p per cent ahead at 9.55p a share.

Like-for-like sales were 13.2 per cent ahead and at its 113 re-fitted shops, like-for-like sales growth was 25 per cent. Shops that were moved to new sites performed even better.

In the first two months of the second half, sales grew 11.1 per cent on a like-for-like basis. More moderate growth is expected during the rest of this year.

The company will pay an interim dividend of 1.65p (1.5p) on April 30.

Sheffield United in red

SHEFFIELD UNITED, the quoted first division football club, is "hopeful" of achieving promotion this season — a year earlier than planned. The club, which floated in January via a reverse takeover of Conrad, said yesterday that restructuring benefits should become apparent in the second

half. The company has just filed for planning consent for a new 41,000-seater stadium. On a pro-forma basis, the enlarged group showed a half-year net loss of £1.3 million, including a loss on transfer fees of £1.1 million. There is no dividend. The shares fell 2p to 89½p on yesterday's news.

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THE TIMES
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Expertise at a premium

ANDREW WINCKLER has been touring the streets of Glasgow. The pinstriped chief executive of the SIB was "on the debit" in Govan, mixing with the investing public. Foundations for the flying visit were put in place last year, when Winckler met Ron Baxter, Scottish Legal Life's chief executive, at The Association of Friendly Societies' annual conference in Harrogate. Winckler apparently wanted to see how the insurance business worked at the grass roots level.

Once the tricky problem of what to wear had been overcome, Winckler turned out to be a natural at collecting insurance premiums from Scottish Legal Life customers. "He went down a bomb," I am told. "Chatting, drinking tea, and collecting money. Both staff and customers loved him."

Down to earth

EASYJET AIRLINE has had its wings clipped by the Advertising Standards Authority. A complaint has been upheld objecting to the cut-price airline's regional press advertisement: "Smart Class not club class. London from £29." The advertisement was misleading because Luton was far outside London. The ASA has asked Easyjet to state "London (Luton)" in future. Tut, tut.

OPENING the Louthbury Gallery to the public has left NatWest short of display cabinets. The arrival of around 30 paintings in the lobby of the bank's HQ has left the much-coveted ProShare trophy — awarded for best meeting the needs of private shareholders — without a home. So many trophies.

Humorous sole

THE legend of Nicholas Shipp lives on. The man who helped to transform ten-year-old TT Group into a mini-conglomerate capitalised at £540 million will long be remembered for his cracking one-liners. John Newman, Shipp's partner in business for more than 30 years, recalls the first meeting with senior staff after their purchase of Crystalate Holdings. Newman was sitting on a desk talking to the troops, oblivious to the fact that he was sporting one black and one brown shoe, when the chief executive of the US operation turned to Shipp and asked: "Does John always wear odd-coloured shoes?" To which Shipp replied: "He's got another pair exactly like that at home."

THE regulator being given the run-around by South West Trains, owned by Stagecoach, over widespread cancellations on the lines into Waterloo and elsewhere is the Office of Passenger Rail Franchising or Opra. It was swiftly and cruelly dubbed Riff-raff in the industry. Now somebody has worked out — while away the hours on a station platform, perhaps — that the Office of Passenger Rail Franchising is an anagram of "Riff-raff Asleep in Recognising Chaos".

Timely job offer

TIM SCORE, who yesterday stepped into Nicholas Webster's shoes as finance director at William Baird, shares something in common with his new boss. David Suddens, who took over as chief executive of the textile company almost a year ago, and is busily gathering his own army to prepare for Willy Baird's future, is a fitness fanatic and keen rower. According to Suddens: "The reason I took Tim on was because of his rowing times — his weren't as good as mine. This means I can keep him firmly under my control."

MORAG PRESTON

Small players run out of fuel on the long road to recovery

Casualties are rife in the petrol war says Carl Mortished

Empty forecourts, padlocks on the petrol pumps and shutters down on shopfronts — an ever more frequent sight for motorists as the petrol retailing industry continues its vicious contraction. Last year, some 1,500 petrol stations closed in Britain, a decline of 10 per cent and more than double the rate of the previous year.

Petrol station numbers have been shrinking for more than a decade but the rate of attrition among independent dealers is accelerating and the reasons are well-known. Big oil companies, led by Esso, have been discounting the price of petrol for long periods last year they were selling the product at a loss in a bid to restore market share lost to the hypermarkets. Esso will not reveal the cost of its Pricewatch campaign but it has yet to deny industry estimates that it lost £200 million, while BP disclosed that the price war in the UK cost its downstream business some £85 million.

Overall, petrol retailers in the UK have lost about £1 billion. According to Wood Mackenzie, the oil consultant, the average gross margin earned from selling a litre of unleaded petrol has fallen 3p a litre since 1994, the year before Esso began Pricewatch trials. That reduction spread over the 29.5 billion litres of fuel sold in the UK amounts to a loss of about £890 million and Wood Mackenzie reckons the majors will continue their squeeze on the market. "The UK retail market is only a small part of their worldwide operations. To carry on this battle, you have to have a long-term commitment to the market, ie, you have to be one of the majors or it is your only business, in which case you fight tooth and nail."

The irony is that the underlying petrol market is remarkably healthy. Last year, the volume of road fuel sales grew 4 per cent, the best increase since 1989. So, why are the oil companies prepared to throw their money into this battle when they could be profiting from economic recovery?

If you believe the majors, the enemy is the hypermarket. Huge volumes and low overheads allow supermarkets to sell petrol at tiny gross margins — 3p a litre — without suffering losses. Most service stations, which must pay rent and rates out of lower volume business, need margins of 6p to 7p to stay



Prices are forever changing on the forecourt as companies respond to reductions by rivals

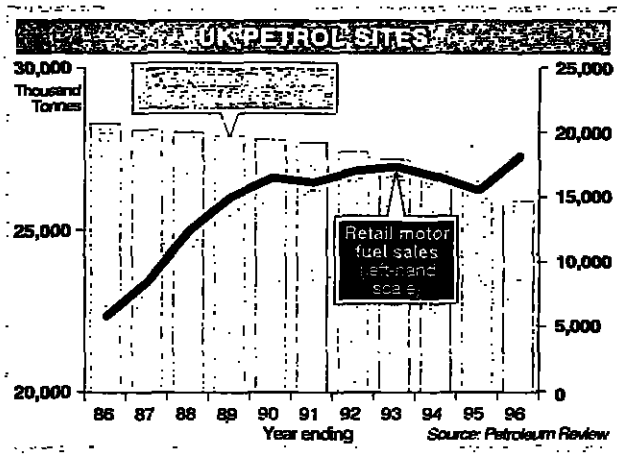
in the black. Esso launched its campaign to match the supermarket prices when it realised in 1995 that its market share had fallen from 20 per cent to 16 per cent, largely because of discounting by hypermarkets. That might ring true, except that the facts get in the way. Esso claims its marketing campaign has succeeded in restoring its market share. But at whose expense? The hypermarkets continue to expand: figures from the Institute of Petroleum's Retail Marketing Survey show that the grocers increased the number of sites that sell petrol by 6.5 per cent in a year in which the total number of petrol retailing sites in the UK fell more than 10 per cent. The contraction in sites is at the expense

of independent dealers — sites owned and managed by private operators who have an agreement with an oil company to supply their brand of petrol. Big oil companies, such as Esso and Shell, have been reducing their independent dealer network. Without huge volumes, independents cannot afford to run at the tight margins imposed by the discounters. The biggest reduction in dealer network last year was at Frost Group — owner of the Save brand —

which saw its chain shrink from 1,144 sites to 614, mainly because of a deliberate strategy of resisting price cuts. Sites owned by independent Save operators fell from 600 to about 200.

Frost Group was once the industry discounteer. Two years ago, the expansionist Frost acquired Burnham's chain only to see its plans scuppered by Pricewatch. The market turmoil caused Frost to do an about-face, preferring to sacrifice sales to preserve profits.

The company has lost about 40 per cent of its volume as a result. James Frost, chairman, clearly believes that Esso's Pricewatch campaign is aimed at independent dealers, not the hypermarkets. "The majors are selling petrol at a



Accountants spoiling for a scrap rally to their standards boards

Robert Bruce watches attempts at global harmony turn into a battle for supremacy

These are testing times in the world of financial reporting. A race is on to try to produce international and universally acceptable financial reporting rules by this time next year. The prize is a simple one. Those rules, theoretically, would provide the key for any company in any country to unlock the opportunity of a listing on US stock markets.

The problem is that this is unlikely to happen. And even if it does, existing domestic rules would still be out of kilter with the new and harmonised rules in several key areas. Finance directors argue that this is unfair, yet they have made little fuss about it and made little effort to become involved in the rule-making process.

And there is the politics. There are three main bodies involved. One is international, the other two domestic. The International Accounting Standards Committee (IASC) sets the pace on producing a core set of global standards. This has always been its role, but in the past it was a question of sorting out agreement at the lowest common denominator level. Its mission was to ensure that countries that had no standard-setting body of their own could have some broad and acceptable off-the-peg rules.

The US Financial Accounting Standards Board (FASB) is the senior domestic body and the one which, traditionally, has set the pace. More recently the UK Accounting Standards Board (ASB) has come to represent the new reformist and practical wing of financial rule-setting. Neither of the two

senior domestic bodies has taken kindly to the IASC, under the rejuvenating leadership of Sir Bryan Carsberg, in what is widely seen as its bid to gain global supremacy. Dennis Beresford, the FASB's chief, was in London last week to try to ensure that the broad objectives of financial reporting are not lost in a mass of political manoeuvring. "We all share a common objective," he said, "to have international accounting standards which would lead to

high-level reporting by multinationals and all companies."

But there the pouring of oil on troubled waters came to a stop. "The IASC appears to feel that it's them or nobody and that they have to position themselves as the sole surviving body." There is a logic to this. An international body is needed. But in the past the assumption was that the FASB would simply grow into that role.

Meanwhile, finance directors looking to the future find

that they are in difficulties. No one knows what the rules to gain a US listing will be. The IASC rules differ sharply from the normal UK accounting practices on both pensions and deferred tax, for example. And there seem to be no simple ways of squaring that circle.

Beresford is critical of the IASC's ability to finalise its core programme by its target of March next year. "Highly unrealistic," he said, pointing out other hurdles to be overcome.



Sir Bryan Carsberg leads the IASC which has ruffled feathers in Britain and America

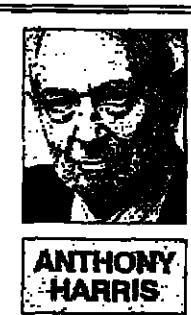
loss but I cannot afford to supply petrol to dealers at a loss." Mr Frost suggests that the big oil companies would not be able to sustain their discounting campaign without the huge upstream earnings from producing crude oil. He points out that Pricewatch has coincided with a high crude price and exceptional upstream profits for the big oil companies. "I have not got any upstream margins to dip into," he says.

Frost will probably survive, largely because of its 400-strong company-owned chain, which produces sufficient volume to support Frost's slimmed-down overheads. However, smaller dealer networks will continue to suffer and could lead to more industry consolidation. Ian Jermin, analyst at Credit Lyonnais Laing, says that the three-tier structure of the petrol retailing industry could collapse, leading to higher prices.

At the top are the oil majors who traditionally sold petrol at premium prices. In the middle are the independents who discounted from the major's benchmark price and at the bottom are the hypermarkets, selling the cheapest product. Mr Jermin concludes: "Take out the middle tier and everybody moves up a peg." Consolidation is already in progress, propelled by Pricewatch and the UK's oversupply of gasoline. The country has too many inefficient refineries, a factor which propelled Gulf, Elf and Murco to enter into a tripartite venture to consolidate two refineries at Milford Haven. The GEM merger followed BP and Mobil's decision to combine their downstream businesses in Europe and speculation is rife that weaker players such as Repsol, the Spanish oil group, Q8, owned by Kuwait Petroleum, and UK Petroleum, part of Powell Duffryn, will either merge with a bigger player or shut down their UK operations.

The process could take a long time and will be messy. For the big oil companies, the losses are manageable if the strategy can produce profits in the longer term. Refining complicates the picture: shutting down a refinery and restoring the site could cost hundreds of millions of pounds. Without a retail chain, some oil companies would have little reason to keep their refineries going. In contrast, many independent retailers source their fuel from abroad.

In the end, oil companies will have to recognise that their brands have little significance to UK consumers. The virtual disappearance of Mobil, subsumed by BP, and the decision by Esso to sell petrol on price alone is a step along that road. But it is an expensive journey and the industry could easily lose another billion or two before it recovers.



ANTHONY HARRIS

Albanian factor hovering over pensions poser

Last week, a possible near-term threat to equity markets: trouble in earthquake-prone Japan. This week, a probable long-term promise: the European pensions crisis. It may seem odd to describe a grinding fiscal problem as a promise of wealth, but the logic is clear enough. All the prosperous Continental countries have pension schemes that will become virtually insupportable as the dependency ratio — the number of workers available to support each pensioner — falls. It is about four and a half at the moment; it will be only a little more than two by 2030. Something has to give.

Existing schemes can only work with higher taxes and lower pensions — both politically intolerable. The modern answer to politically insoluble problems is to privatise them. A Continental switch into personally owned pension funds, on the British model, seems inevitable. Once complete, this change would generate a flow of new money into the security markets rising to some \$300 billion a year in today's money, or about 4 per cent of the total market capitalisation of the four biggest European economies. Enough, according to Lombard Street Research, to double security prices within a couple of decades.

A crippling liability, turned, at a stroke, into an asset? It sounds too good to be true, and it is. Critics of pay-as-you-go pensions like to compare them to Albanian pyramids — investment schemes fine if you buy early and cash in early, but ruinous later. What they overlook is that private funded schemes are also potentially Albanian. They add to capital funds as long as they are accumulating, but as the retired draw them down again, funds can be sucked out, and values collapse. These schemes are politically irresistible because they do abolish political responsibility, but they will work economically only if the build-up of funds adds to real wealth, not just paper values.

This is possible, but not proven. It does seem likely that the availability of cheap investment capital has added to growth in high-saving

Japan and the low-saving US; but on the downside, a changeover is initially very expensive. The new private-funded generation still has to pay for the old pay-as-you-go benefits while saving for its own future; this double burden — which is also a political problem — must depress spending income, which is bad for growth. Against that, the British example looks hopeful: Mrs Thatcher took the first swipe at the old pay-as-you-go system, funded pensions have boomed, yet British growth has been better than in unreformed Europe.

But that growth has been assisted by the greatest bull market in history, which has made funding cheaper and more attractive. Europe cannot take such luck for granted. Or can it? We are really back where we came in. A Continental pensions reform would mobilise large new funds for the securities markets, and sustain that flow until the new funds matured. All the same, the effect on prices would surely not be as dramatic as the Lombard Street arithmetic suggests. Securities markets are now global so the impact of new saving should be measured against world rather than merely European market capitalisation: say 1 per cent a year.

Modest, then, though still not trivial, and undoubtedly positive. Other things being equal, pension reform on the Continent should give legs to the bull for several years; but hardly the legs to escape, say, a Wall Street panic.

Pension reform is difficult and unpopular so it needs confident leadership to put it in hand. Thatcher did it. Blair promises to extend it. Kohl could have done it until recently but may have wasted his prestige on EMU. France is a doubtful starter: Chirac seems to prefer the dramatic to the radical. The current Italian coalition looks too fragile to embark on a long-term project.

So even if pensions reform looks inevitable, it is likely to be slow. The Euro cavalry will not ride to the rescue of equity investors for a few years, at best.

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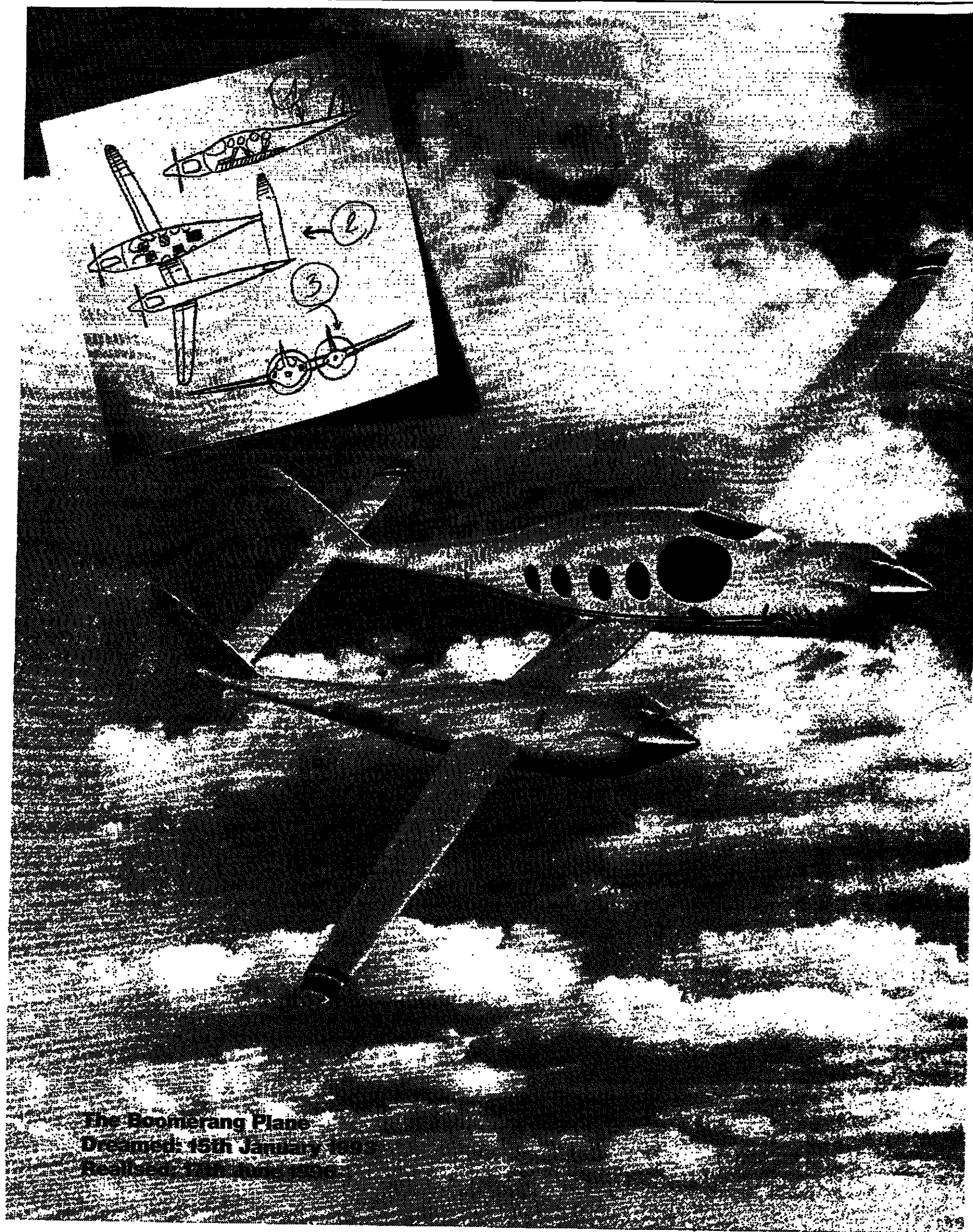
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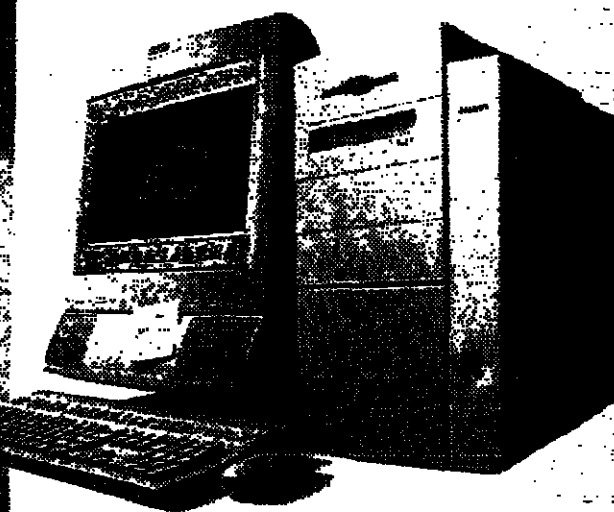
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TRADING PERIOD: Settlement takes place five business days after the day of trade. Changes are calculated on the previous day's close, but adjustments are made when a stock is ex-dividend. Changes, yields and price/earnings ratios are based on middle prices.

76	Alb. Farms	80	4,7	124	82	McCormick West	69		6,6	79
79	Calgas	305	2,4	28	107	Belle Harbor	235	+	2,5	108
105	Car. Camp	1774	+	1	277	171	Rehoboth	200		
105	Coastville	3	6,3	84	203	100	Rehoboth	12	5,8	9,2
77	Chandler	161	3	6,3	1594	117	St. Joe	1529	+	19
77	Clark	57	4	0,8	125	107	St. Joe	4	3,7	16,6
91	Clark	105	9	0,7	185	107	St. Joe	120	+	4
91	Clark	105	9	0,7	185	107	St. Joe	120	+	4
123	Clark	130	2,8	14,7	1053	750	St. Joe	1001	+	5
123	Clark	370	4	9,3						

1912	1911	1910	1909	1908	1907	1906	1905	1904	1903	1902	1901	1900	1899	1898	1897	1896	1895	1894	1893	1892	1891	1890	1889	1888	1887	1886	1885	1884	1883	1882	1881	1880	1879	1878	1877	1876	1875	1874	1873	1872	1871	1870	1869	1868	1867	1866	1865	1864	1863	1862	1861	1860	1859	1858	1857	1856	1855	1854	1853	1852	1851	1850	1849	1848	1847	1846	1845	1844	1843	1842	1841	1840	1839	1838	1837	1836	1835	1834	1833	1832	1831	1830	1829	1828	1827	1826	1825	1824	1823	1822	1821	1820	1819	1818	1817	1816	1815	1814	1813	1812	1811	1810	1809	1808	1807	1806	1805	1804	1803	1802	1801	1800	1799	1798	1797	1796	1795	1794	1793	1792	1791	1790	1789	1788	1787	1786	1785	1784	1783	1782	1781	1780	1779	1778	1777	1776	1775	1774	1773	1772	1771	1770	1769	1768	1767	1766	1765	1764	1763	1762	1761	1760	1759	1758	1757	1756	1755	1754	1753	1752	1751	1750	1749	1748	1747	1746	1745	1744	1743	1742	1741	1740	1739	1738	1737	1736	1735	1734	1733	1732	1731	1730	1729	1728	1727	1726	1725	1724	1723	1722	1721	1720	1719	1718	1717	1716	1715	1714	1713	1712	1711	1710	1709	1708	1707	1706	1705	1704	1703	1702	1701	1700	1699	1698	1697	1696	1695	1694	1693	1692	1691	1690	1689	1688	1687	1686	1685	1684	1683	1682	1681	1680	1679	1678	1677	1676	1675	1674	1673	1672	1671	1670	1669	1668	1667	1666	1665	1664	1663	1662	1661	1660	1659	1658	1657	1656	1655	1654	1653	1652	1651	1650	1649	1648	1647	1646	1645	1644	1643	1642	1641	1640	1639	1638	1637	1636	1635	1634	1633	1632	1631	1630	1629	1628	1627	1626	1625	1624	1623	1622	1621	1620	1619	1618	1617	1616	1615	1614	1613	1612	1611	1610	1609	1608	1607	1606	1605	1604	1603	1602	1601	1600	1599	1598	1597	1596	1595	1594	1593	1592	1591	1590	1589	1588	1587	1586	1585	1584	1583	1582	1581	1580	1579	1578	1577	1576	1575	1574	1573	1572	1571	1570	1569	1568	1567	1566	1565	1564	1563	1562	1561	1560	1559	1558	1557	1556	1555	1554	1553	1552	1551	1550	1549	1548	1547	1546	1545	1544	1543	1542	1541	1540	1539	1538	1537	1536	1535	1534	1533	1532	1531	1530	1529	1528	1527	1526	1525	1524	1523	1522	1521	1520	1519	1518	1517	1516	1515	1514	1513	1512	1511	1510	1509	1508	1507	1506	1505	1504	1503	1502	1501	1500	1499	1498	1497	1496	1495	1494	1493	1492	1491	1490	1489	1488	1487	1486	1485	1484	1483	1482	1481	1480	1479	1478	1477	1476	1475	1474	1473	1472	1471	1470	1469	1468	1467	1466	1465	1464	1463	1462	1461	1460	1459	1458	1457	1456	1455	1454	1453	1452	1451	1450	1449	1448	1447	1446	1445	1444	1443	1442	1441	1440	1439	1438	1437	1436	1435	1434	1433	1432	1431	1430	1429	1428	1427	1426	1425	1424	1423	1422	1421	1420	1419	1418	1417	1416	1415	1414	1413	1412	1411	1410	1409	1408	1407	1406	1405	1404	1403	1402	1401	1400	1399	1398	1397	1396	1395	1394	1393	1392	1391	1390	1389	1388	1387	1386	1385	1384	1383	1382	1381	1380	1379	1378	1377	1376	1375	1374	1373	1372	1371	1370	1369	1368	1367	1366	1365	1364	1363	1362	1361	1360	1359	1358	1357	1356	1355	1354	1353	1352	1351	1350	1349	1348	1347	1346	1345	1344	1343	1342	1341	1340	1339	1338	1337	1336	1335	1334	1333	1332	1331	1330	1329	1328	1327	1326	1325	1324	1323	1322	1321	1320	1319	1318	1317	1316	1315	1314	1313	1312	1311	1310	1309	1308	1307	1306	1305	1304	1303	1302	1301	1300	1299	1298	1297	1296	1295	1294	1293	1292	1291	1290	1289	1288	1287	1286	1285	1284	1283	1282	1281	1280	1279	1278	1277	1276	1275	1274	1273	1272	1271	1270	1269	1268	1267	1266	1265	1264	1263	1262	1261	1260	1259	1258	1257	1256	1255	1254	1253	1252	1251	1250	1249	1248	1247	1246	1245	1244	1243	1242	1241	1240	1239	1238	1237	1236	1235	1234	1233	1232	1231	1230	1229	1228	1227	1226	1225	1224	1223	1222	1221	1220	1219	1218	1217	1216	1215	1214	1213	1212	1211	1210	1209	1208	1207	1206	1205	1204	1203	1202	1201	1200	1199	1198	1197	1196	1195	1194	1193	1192	1191	1190	1189	1188	1187	1186	1185	1184	1183	1182	1181	1180	1179	1178	1177	1176	1175	1174	1173	1172	1171	1170	1169	1168	1167	1166	1165	1164	1163	1162	1161	1160	1159	1158	1157	1156	1155	1154	1153	1152	1151	1150	1149	1148	1147	1146	1145	1144	1143	1142	1141	1140	1139	1138	1137	1136	1135	1134	1133	1132	1131	1130	1129	1128	1127	1126	1125	1124	1123	1122	1121	1120	1119	1118	1117	1116	1115	1114	1113	1112	1111	1110	1109	1108	1107	1106	1105	1104	1103	1102	1101	1100	1099	1098	1097	1096	1095	1094	1093	1092	1091	1090	1089	1088	1087	1086	1085	1084	1083	1082	1081	1080	1079	1078	1077	1076	1075	1074	1073	1072	1071	1070	1069	1068	1067	1066	1065	1064	1063	1062	1061	1060	1059	1058	1057	1056	1055	1054	1053	1052	1051	1050	1049	1048	1047	1046	1045	1044	1043	1042	1041	1040	1039	1038	1037	1036	1035	1034	1033	1032	1031	1030	1029	1028	1027	1026	1025	1024	1023	1022	1021	1020	1019	1018	1017	1016	1015	1014	1013	1012	1011	1010	1009	1008	1007	1006	1005	1004	1003	1002	1001	1000	999	998	997	996	995	994	993	992	991	990	989	988	987	986	985	984	983	982	981	980	979	978	977	976	975	974	973	972	971	970	969	968	967	966	965	964	963	962	961	960	959	958	957	956	955	954	953	952	951	950	949	948	947	946	945	944	943	942	941	940	939	938	937	936	935	934	933	932	931	930	929	928	927	926	925	924	923	922	921	920	919	918	917	916	915	914	913	912	911	910	909	908	907	906	905	904	903	902	901	900	899	898	897	896	895	894	893	892	891	890	889	888	887	886	885	884	883	882	881	880	879	878	877	876	875	874	873	872	871	870	869	868	867	866	865	864	863	862	861	860	859	858	857	856	855	854	853	852	851	850	849	848	847	846	845	844	843	842	841	840	839	838	837	836	835	834	833	832	831	830	829	828	827	826	825	824	823	822	821	820	819	818	817	816	815	814	813	812	811	810	809	808	807	806	805	804	803	802	801	800	799	798	797	796	795	794	793	792	791	790	789	788	787	786	785	784	783	782	781	780	779	778	777	776	775	774	773	772	771	770	769	768	767	766	765	764	763	762	761	760	759	758	757	756	755	754	753	752	751	750	749	748	747	746	745	744	743	742	741	740	739	738	737	736	735	734	733	732	731	730	729	728	727	726	725	724	723	722	721	720	719	718	717	716	715	714	713	712	711	710	709	708	707	706	705	704	703	702	701	700	699	698	697	696	695	694	693	692	691	690	689	688	687	686	685	684	683	682	681	680	679	678	677	676	675	674	673	672	671	670	669	668	667	666	665	664	663	662	661	660	659	658	657	656	655	654	653	652	651	650	649	648	647	646	645	644	643	642	641	640	639	638	637	636	635	634	633	632	631	630	629	628	627	626	625	624	623	622	621	620	619	618	617	616	615	614	613	612	611	610	609	608	607	606	605	604	603	602	601	600	599	598	597	596	595	594	593	592	591	590	589	588	587	586	585	584	583	582	581	580	579	578	577	576	575	574	573	572	571	570	569	568	567	566	565	564	563	562	561	560	559	558	557	556	555	554	553	552	551	550	549	548	547	546	545	544	543	542	541	540	539	538	537	536	535	534	533	532	531	530	529	528	527	526	525	524	523	522	521	520	519	518	517	516	515	514	513	512	511	510	509	508	507	506	505	504	503	502	501	500	499	498	497	496	495	494	493	492	491	490	489	488	487	486	485	484	483	482	481	480	4
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Tideman leaves Australia

FROM RACHEL BRIDGE
IN SYDNEY

CHRIS TIDEMAN, former director of Burton, is heading back home to Britain after unexpectedly resigning as chief executive of David Jones, Australia's upmarket retailer, less than two days before the company is expected to unveil a 50 per cent drop in half-year profits.

His sudden departure follows growing criticism from institutional shareholders about the way he was running the company and in particular his decision to open new stores in suburban areas of Australia, which many feared would take the company downmarket.

Since Mr Tideman took up the job two years ago David Jones has issued four profit warnings. He had hoped to introduce more modern working practices at David Jones.

He was formerly chief executive of Burton's retail arm and began his retailing career at Hepworth, the men's wear chain.

BY SARAH CUNNINGHAM

PENTLAND GROUP, the sports and leisurewear group, went into the red last year because of the cost of disposing of its US electrical accessories business.

Operating profits rose 28 per cent to £36 million but exceptional charges of £40.4 million resulted in a pre-tax loss of £3.8 million in the year to the end of December, and a loss per share of 5.25p, the company revealed.

This compares to a pre-tax profit of £52.3 million and earnings per share of 5.29p a year earlier.

Losses on the disposal of Woods Industries cost £32.3 million while £8.1 million was set aside for a writedown of the company's investment in the struggling LA Gear company.

Pentland is looking for a buyer for its last remaining non-core business, which is Holmes Products, a domestic electrical appliance producer.

Pentland had a particularly strong performance from its Speedo, Ellesse and Kickers brands and has record order books in many of its



Stephen Rubin, chairman of Pentland group, with models Kate Sexton, left, and Abbie French yesterday

businesses, it revealed yesterday. Turnover at Speedo, the swimwear brand, grew 19 per cent, helped by the high-profile of the Aquablade swim-

suits at the Atlanta Olympic Games.

The company said that 76 per cent of all Olympic medals in the pool were won by

athletes wearing Speedo, while three of the four world records set at the Georgia Tech pool in Atlanta were achieved by swimmers wear-

ing Aquablade suits. Sales of Aquablade, and of similar styled suits made of cheaper materials, are ahead of expectations, Pentland said.

Disposal puts Pentland into red

Profits run well ahead at Adidas

BY A CORRESPONDENT

Sales of Ellesse, the Italian sports and leisurewear brand, grew 50 per cent during the year, with operating profit rising by a similar amount. The order book for the first half of the current year is well ahead of last year's level.

Kickers, the fashion footwear brand, enjoyed a surge in sales and profit of more than 60 per cent. Its order book for this year is also strong.

Berghaus, the outdoor clothing brand, had a less successful year, with sales and operating profits down. The cost of setting up Reusch UK, the British branch of the German goalkeeping and ski glove business, meant a profit decline for that subsidiary. Losses continued at Mitre, the football company, although at a reduced level and with improved sales, Pentland said.

The company will pay a final dividend of 2.1p (1.95p) per share on July 1, making a total dividend of 3.5p (3.3p).

Pentland also announced the appointment of a new finance director. Nicholas Webster is joining from William Baird, where he has been finance director since 1986.

ADIDAS, the German sports-wear manufacturer, achieved a 28 per cent increase in net profits, to DM314 million, last year, on sales that improved 35 per cent to DM4.7 billion.

The gains were mostly put down to a strong performance in Europe and success in North America and the Asia-Pacific region. European sales rose 33 per cent, helped by a strong performance in Britain. The group also enjoyed big sales gains in the Spanish and Swedish markets.

The 1996 dividend is DM1.10 a share, compared with 25 pfennigs in the previous 12 months.

Adidas, which secured a stock market listing in Frankfurt and Paris in November 1995, said sales in the first quarter of the current year had risen 51 per cent on the first three months of last year to DM995 million.

The company earned a quarter profit of DM8 million, compared with DM7 million last time.

BUSINESS ROUNDUP

European markets take Peek higher

PEEK, the traffic management group, lifted pre-tax profits 4 per cent to £12.6 million in 1996. Turnover rose 13 per cent to £162.1 million and earnings increased 4 per cent to 6.0p a share. Traffic control systems account for over three quarters of group turnover with sales last year rising 14 per cent to £127 million.

Allen Standley, chief executive, said the best performance was seen in the UK and other European markets. Peek has won its first contract in the UK for a traffic enforcement system using digital cameras to detect traffic offences such as speeding and illegal parking. The final dividend is held at 2.35p, making an unchanged total of 3.4p. Mr Standley said US markets last year were "extremely difficult" with increased competition leading to price cutting and lower margins. The company's field data division, which makes measurement kits and rugged portable computers, lifted turnover by 9 per cent to £35 million.

Expamet back in black

EXPAMET International, the supplier of building and industrial products, returned to profit in 1996, earning £16.1 million before tax (£31.3 million loss). The profit included a net £9.5 million surplus from the sale of PAC International and Radionics, two electronic security businesses. Restructuring and disposal costs hit 1995 results. Profits before tax and non-recurring items were £7.2 million last year (£6.1 million). Underlying earnings were 7.3p a share (6.19p). A final dividend of 1.85p a share lifts the total to 3.3p from 3p.

Drug boost for Glaxo

SHARES of Glaxo Wellcome rose 33p to £11.50 after the UK drug company received Swedish Government approval to market naramig, a new treatment for migraine. Naramig has been approved for the acute treatment of the headache phase of migraine attacks with or without aura. Glaxo said, adding that it is the first regulatory approval for naramig. Sweden will now act as the reference member state under the European Commission's mutual recognition procedure.

WSP acquires Graham

WSP HOLDINGS, the consulting engineer, is acquiring Graham Consulting Group, a specialist civil engineering consultancy, for almost £3.6 million in cash and shares. Graham's turnover was £20 million in the nine months to the end of 1996. It has 540 employees in the UK. WSP also reported a 28 per cent rise in pre-tax profits to £2.3 million in 1996 on turnover up 11 per cent to £28.2 million. Earnings rose 15 per cent to 5.4p a share. The total dividend increases 9 per cent to 2.4p a share, with a 1.3p final.

Lang approves deals

IAN LANG, the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry, said he has decided not to refer the proposed acquisition by Dana Corporation of Ingersoll-Rand Clark Hurth's business to the Monopolies and Mergers Commission. He has also cleared the proposed acquisition by NT Acquisition on behalf of Ingersoll-Rand of Newman Tonks. The Government has also cleared the proposed Thermo Instrument acquisition of Life Sciences International.

BAA in Bali bid

BAA, the UK airport operator, is expected to secure a contract to operate and manage Bali airport in Indonesia. BAA, in consortium with AMP, the Australian fund manager, and Adiom, will take a 30 per cent stake in the airport for US\$50 million in return for a 20-year contract to operate and manage both the international and domestic terminals. The Indonesian Government will retain the remaining 70 per cent share. BAA is the only operator bidding for the contract.

Write-off hits VHE

SHARES in VHE Holdings fell 15p to 80p after the building and construction company said that pre-tax profits in the year to March 31 would be below expectations because of a £1.2 million write-off for costs incurred in an unsuccessful attempt to gain Government approval for a landfill site in South Yorkshire. The company said ordinary trading was satisfactory and operating profits to March 31, excluding this write-off, remain in line with expectations.

B&WA discusses sale

SHARES in Barr & Wallace Arnold Trust, the motor distribution and leisure and holidays group, rose from 238p to 255p after the company said that it was in talks to sell its leisure division. The announcement had been made in the light of recent share price movements and a further division made £3.2 million in the year to December 31, 1995 on sales of £63 million, about one quarter of total turnover.

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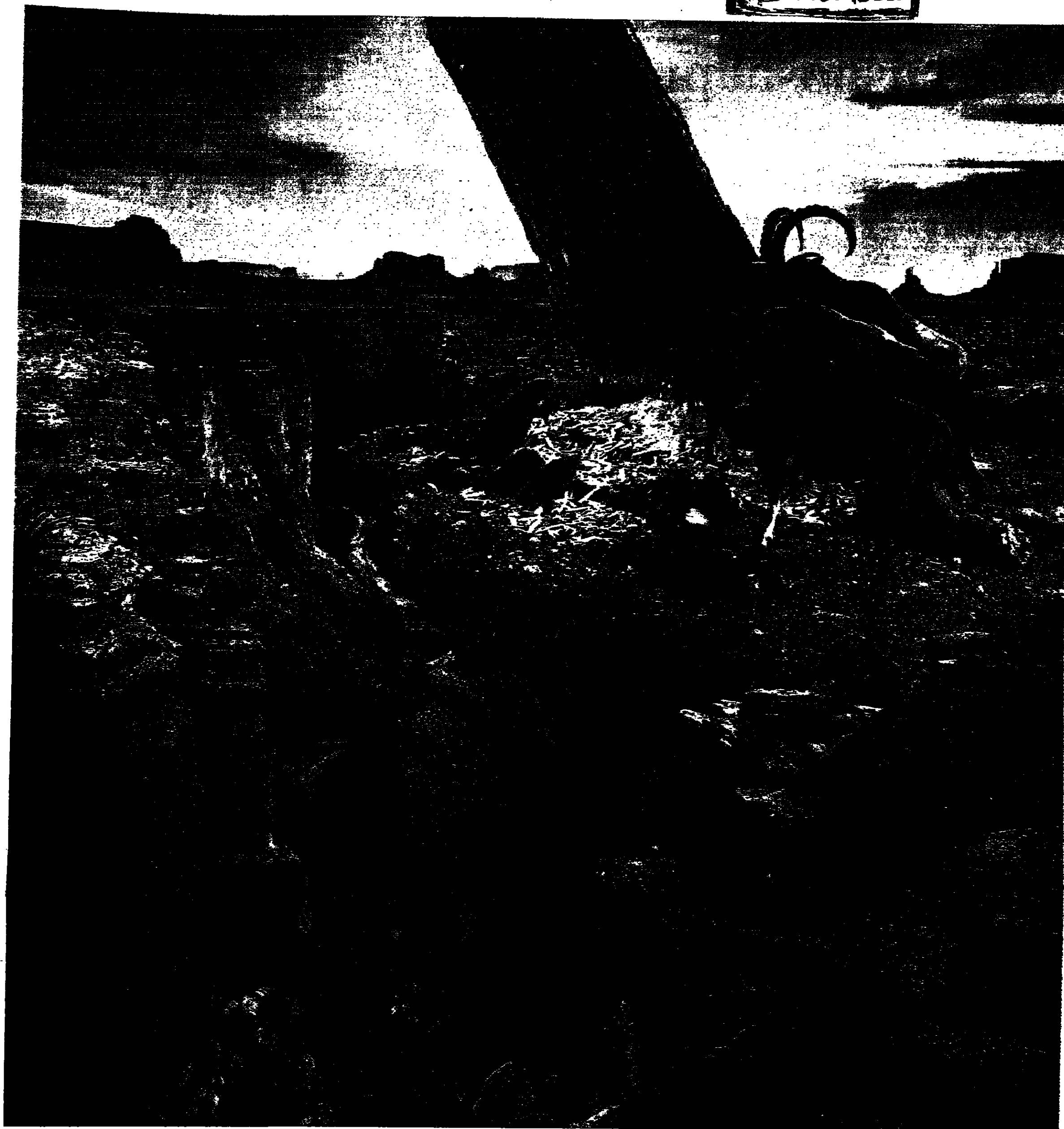
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1. *Journal of the American Medical Association*, 1990; 263: 1025-1028.

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■ DESIGN

Over the top: two British architects take the world of bridges by storm



■ MUSIC 1

Andrew Davis leads BBC forces through a Sounding the Century night of Stravinsky

THE TIMES
ARTS

■ MUSIC 2

... while Gidon Kremer's Schubert celebration at the Barbican takes a turn for the funereal



■ RISING STAR

After her sudden leap to fame in *Trainspotting*, Kelly Macdonald now faces a live audience

Spectacular spanners in the work

Two British architects are designing the sort of bridges that bring gasps of approval. Marcus Binney reports

Inspired is the only word to describe the winning design by Chris Wilkinson and Jim Eyre for a new bridge over the Tyne. Quite apart from its dazzling grace, it is genuinely revolutionary in engineering terms, too, introducing an entirely novel form of "opening" bridge. Best of all, it is a runaway winner with local people — one in the eye to all those who claim the public is perennially hostile to innovative design. "Bridges are conspicuous and there's a responsibility to make them exciting," Wilkinson says.

In fact Wilkinson and Eyre are providing Britain's answer to the breathtaking bridge designs of the Spanish architect Santiago Calatrava. The appeal of their bridges lies in bold, sinuous curves, curves you would call voluptuous if they weren't so elegant. They belong to a group of architects intent on reviving the thrill of bridge design, not by competing against engineers but working closely with them.

Newcastle was seeking a low-level footbridge across the Baltic Flour Mills, now being turned into a museum of modern art. To achieve the 80ft clearance needed for the occasional tall ship to pass, the obvious solution would have been a drawbridge or swing bridge. Instead, Eyre came up with a novel idea for a bridge that opens like a giant eyelid. It is achieved by making the bridge deck as strongly curved as the arch that carries it. When down, the deck swings out dramatically over the water; when up, it becomes a second arch.

Bridge design has moved into the realm of the magical

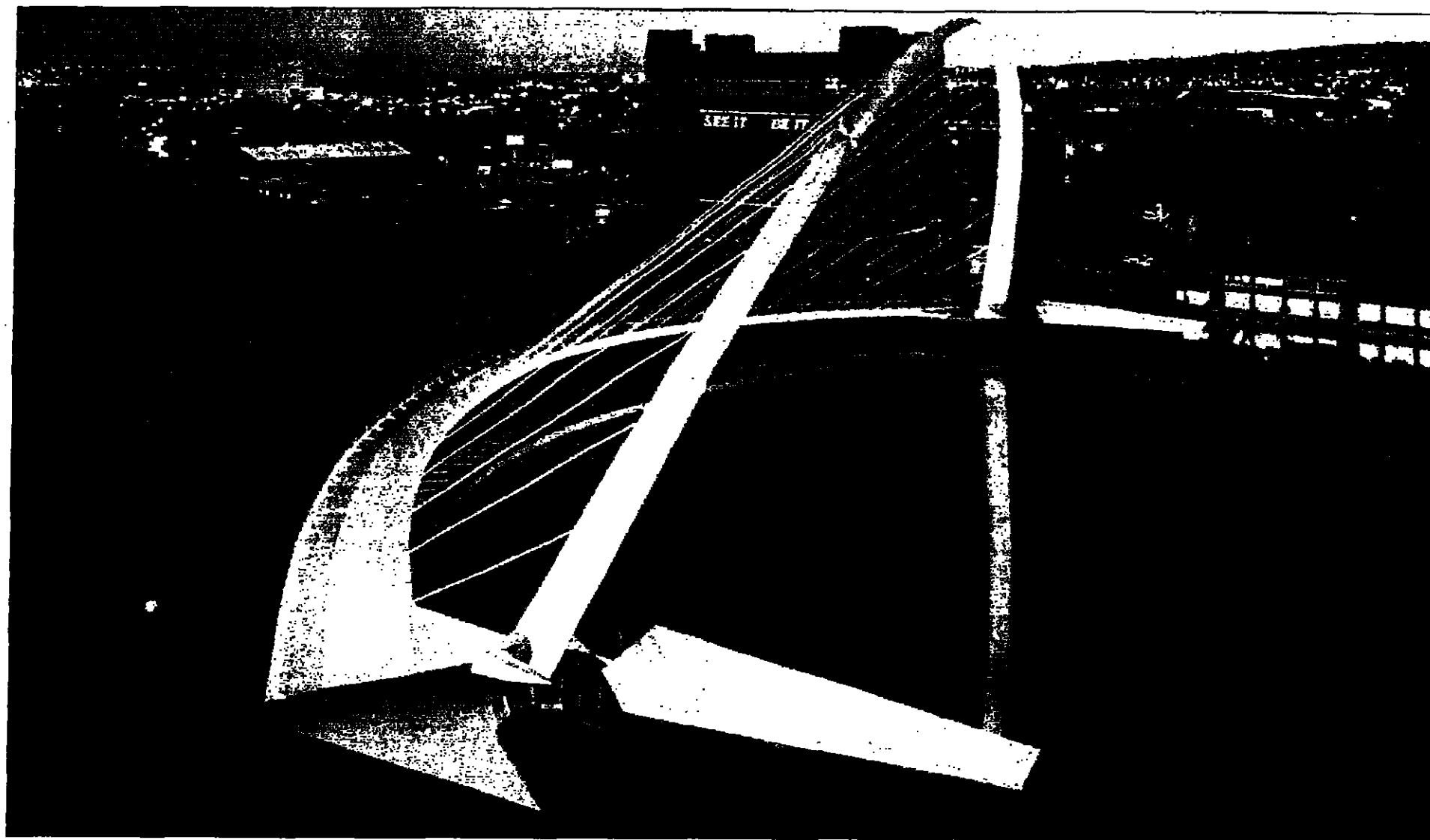
"We push the boundaries each time and try to develop the technology," says Wilkinson. Eyre expands this point: "The key is not to have too many moving parts. The whole bridge moves on just two bearings."

Their initiation into bridge design came in London's Docklands. The Development Corporation had admired Wilkinson's spectacular design for a vast new Jubilee Line train depot at Stratford (he has written a book on the virtues of supersheds). They were one of several architects and engineers short-listed to team up and design a footbridge linking South Dock (then flourishing before the IRA bomb) with Canary Wharf proper.

To make matters more complicated, the bridge had to be designed in two parts, as half the dock is due to be filled in. Wilkinson and Eyre's solution was a snaking bridge formed of two equal curving sections, one reversed to form an S. One part will swivel to allow boats to pass. When the dock narrows, this will be realigned to connect the two banks and the redundant part will be moved to become a separate bridge near by. "Two bridges for the price of one," says Wilkinson.

In this cable-supported bridge, moreover, the masts and cables are all on a tilt. Thus the patterns created are far more varied than a simple straight line-up of cables fanning out from a vertical mast — particularly when these wonderful geometries are reflected in the water.

The bridge opens in May, virtually at the same time as two other Wilkinson and Eyre



Bridge across the Tyne: the Wilkinson and Eyre design, a structure of dazzling grace that opens and closes like a giant eyelid, has been a success with the public and the critics

bridges. The first is the Hulme Arch, a new "gateway" spanning one of the main southern road approaches to Manchester. This is intended to proclaim the resurgence of Hulme, an area blighted by mass clearance in the Sixties and severed by this very road.

The trick here is that the single arch carrying the bridge is set diagonally, so both roads go through it. At the last moment Wilkinson changed the profile to a dramatically taller parabolic arch.

Next came victory in a competition for a small £500,000 bridge in Bedford opening next spring, where they beat Calatrava himself into second place. Here a pair of bowed arches open out like butterfly wings, creating a piece of pure sculpture.

On a smaller but no less dramatic scale, their dramatic glass bridge across the atrium of the Science Museum will be the focal point when the new Challenge of Materials Gallery opens there next month.

The bridge has a glass deck formed of laminated glass "planks" suspended from hundreds of cobalt steel wires no more than a sixteenth of an inch thick — "guitar strings" says Wilkinson. As people move across it, stress gauges connected to a fibre optic display system will change the colour of the glass.

Wilkinson and Eyre's success is due in part to the seductive appeal of their computer images, showing bridges and buildings glowing

with light in the evening. The earliest were done by the architect Alan Davidson who now devotes all his talents to "computer renderings". Now Wilkinson and Eyre have the machinery and skills to do their own. The results have the quality of heightened reality, without appearing artfully flattering — though in real life, wind-ruffled waters may make the reflections just a touch less dazzling.

The bridges themselves will undoubtedly glow, thanks to

brilliant use of built-in lighting: uplighters playing on the cables and masts; "light-emitting diodes" lasting up to 20 years set in the deck; and continuous bands of light along the undersides of the handrails.

Following the Calatrava example, Wilkinson and Eyre show bridge design moving from the sublime (awesome structures such as the Forth Bridge) to the magical, exciting and only half-believable. They now display all their

buildings at night, notably a design for a 1,600ft-long riverside sports centre for Stockton-on-Tees containing an indoor canoeing course. Glowing as brightly as a spaceship, it looks as great a sensation as any of Mitterrand's grand projects. Wilkinson and Eyre are on a roll. As people tire of minimalist austerity they offer a vision of the future that is adventurous, daring, graceful and technically on the edge, architecture's counterpart of the supersonic.

GREAT BRITISH HOPES

Rising stars in the arts firmament
KELLY MACDONALD

Age: 21.

Profession: Actress.

Why does her face look so familiar? She made a sensational debut last year as Diane, the schoolgirl who has a one-night stand with Ewan McGregor in *Trainspotting*.

Previous credits? Nothing. Not even a school play. "I'd had no acting training either, apart from ten evenings with an amateur dramatics club at home in Glasgow when I was 16."

Debutante: She will make her first stage appearance in the British premiere of David Rabe's *Hurlyburly* at the Old Vic on March 24. "I have no idea how I'm going to deal with an audience. I might be shocking."

How did she become Diane? She was working in a Glasgow pub when she heard about the auditions. After a "terrifying" screen test with McGregor, the part was hers.

The *Trainspotting* effect: Offers of work have flowed in. She played a child abuse victim in the Screen Two drama, *Flowers of the Forest*, and a prostitute in the film *Stella Does Tricks*. She has also finished shooting her first period role, in Balzac's *Cousine Bette*.

Pause for thought: "Everything has happened incredibly fast. But I'm starting to feel a bit more comfortable with ending up an actress. This is what I want to do."

DANIEL ROSENTHAL



CONCERTS: Stravinsky well served by the BBC; mixed bag of Schubert dabs; stirring centenary for Brahms

The stuff of legends

BBCSO/Davis
Festival Hall/Radio 3



Stravinsky: gentle music with a hard underbelly

AS THE BBC orchestras are busy *Sounding the Century* with Stravinsky, the BBC Symphony Orchestra offered on Friday one of several rites of spring — and possibly the most fragrantly vernal of them all. The story of Persephone, daughter of the corn-goddess Demeter, and of her seasonal journeyings between world and underworld, drew from Stravinsky some of his most gentle, leisurely music.

But there were few longeurs in a performance conducted by Andrew Davis which formed a stimulating and illuminating complement to *Oedipus Rex* after the interval.

The tender skin of *Persephone* is deceptive: under its surface lie some tough and teasing rhythms. The BBC Symphony Chorus and New London Children's Choir re-animated André Gide's text with virtuoso energy, matching the orchestra's springing articulation and Davis's own irresistible momentum.

Irène Jacob's flinty native French found just the right semi-ritualised register for Persephone's narrations. As

the tenor Eumolpos, priest of the Eleusinian mysteries, Donald Kaasch gave an authoritative and ringingly clear performance, although much of the plangency of Stravinsky's writing was missed.

The archaic oboe solo which accompanies Persephone's descent to the realm of Pluto: the zombie-like digital movement of the Shades in harp, piano and horn; and Persephone's autumnal string quartet all took on three-dimensional life

in the hands of the BBCSO's soloists.

The orchestra was, if anything, over-apparent in *Oedipus Rex* — Alan Opie's Crœon and Messenger had to fight to be heard over its mighty clamour. So not all the "living statues" of Stravinsky's operatic stood out in the relief the composer intended. Jon Garrison was a high but constricted tenor. *Oedipus*, Louise Winter a smouldering Jocasta, Samuel West an indifferent Narrator.

Again the glory of the performance was its Chorus — here the men's voices of the BBCSO — pushing against the barline, kicking their way through consonants, and stage-managing both bronzed glory and dark, valedictory grief with consummate skill.

HILARY FINCH

A team to follow

Cologne RSO/Vonk
Birmingham

WHEN the Cologne Radio Symphony Orchestra last toured here, two years ago, it proved itself to be one of the more competent German ensembles of its kind. Now, with Hans Vonk in his sixth year as its principal conductor, it is better than most of them.

If the woodwind is not as reliable as it was, there is more than enough compensation for that in the newly cohesive, almost luxuriant sound of the strings. Even more interesting is that the relationship between the conductor and the orchestra, which had seemed forbiddingly serious in 1995, is now more relaxed and correspondingly more congenial.

True, they were not playing Bruckner this time, but there is nothing frivolous about a Brahms symphony either, least of all on the hundredth anniversary of the composer's death.

For the Cologne RSO celebrating Brahms is an occasion for displaying affection and for reacting with unaffected spontaneity to the more inspired ideas. Just why Vonk chose to present the Scherzo and the finale of the Fourth Symphony as though they

were one movement, with scarcely a break between them, it is impossible to say. All one can do is deplore the practice.

On the other hand, the passion applied to the opening Allegro, the lyrical beauty of the Andante and the splendidly cumulative progress of the last movement were all very positive aspects of an attractively fresh and admiring interpretation.

The soloist in the Brahms Violin Concerto was Shlomo Mintz, whose intonation on his first entry and for much of the exposition of the first movement was as dubious as that of the woodwind. Perhaps it is a mistake to open a programme with a concerto, before nerves have settled and the atmosphere has calmed. In time, Mintz recovered his characteristic firmness in line and sound, and delivered the big-boned and yet sensitive performance his public expects of him.

GERALD LARNER

No room for light

Gidon Kremer
Barbican

irony and bitterness. The shape and harmony of a phrase from *Death and the Maiden* makes a brief visit, only to be wrestled away.

The performance of the Schmittke exposed an imbalance within the ensemble. Kremer is a levered advocate of Schmittke: his wiry, mercurial sound, now flashing, now barely sounding, operates in an arena of extremes. Against

this, Clemens and Viktoria Hagen, the cellist and violinist of Salzburg's Hagen Quartet, brought their characteristic poise and an understated grace.

In the Schmittke, Viktoria Hagen was a weak link in terms of sound and attack. But in the *Trout Quintet*, which followed in the second half, she excelled in the close passages with cello. Clemens Hagen, a player of great refinement, provided the perfect cello answer to the *Trout's* opening motif, but the contrast made Kremer seem almost giddy. He erupted into an invigorating scherzo, seeming most at home with the Schubert of high jinks and a streak of violence.

HELEN WALLACE

"IN THIS WORLD THERE ARE ONLY TWO TRAGEDIES. ONE IS NOT GETTING WHAT ONE WANTS, AND THE OTHER IS GETTING IT."

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TOMORROW

Director Anthony Minghella's screen adaptation of *The English Patient* finally reaches Britain

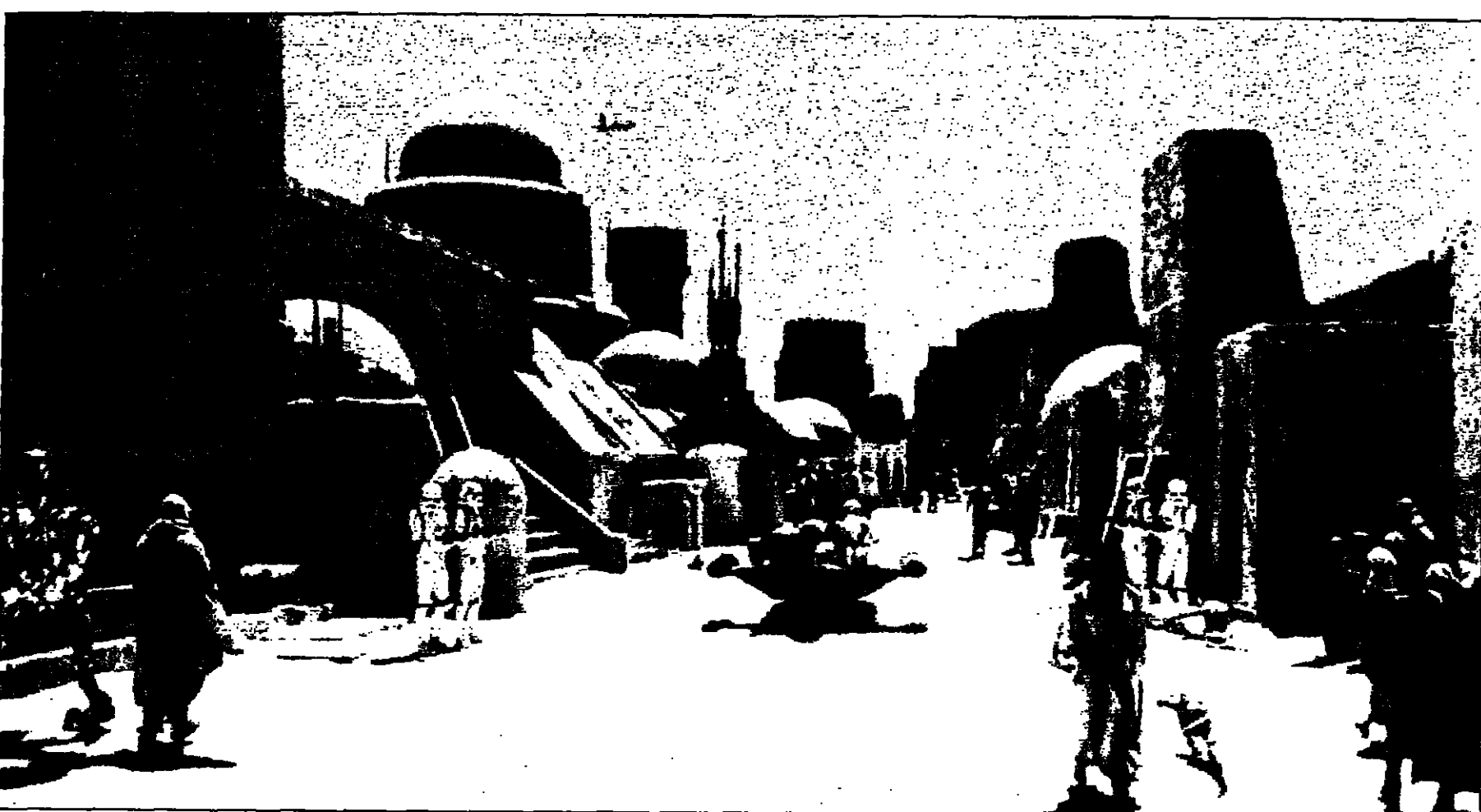
Twenty years on, as Luke, Han and cute little R2-D2 return to our cinemas, Geoff Brown assesses the *Star Wars* legacy

The force is with you, again

Twenty years ago, Woody Allen and Diane Keaton were wrestling with lobsters on the kitchen floor in *Annie Hall*. John Travolta gyrated his way into audience's hearts in *Saturday Night Fever*. Buñuel made his last film, *The Obscure Object of Desire*, and Ridley Scott made his first, *The Duellists*. But one film looms above them all from 1977. It is *Star Wars*. George Lucas's tale of galactic civil war and a film shortly to loom large again following its re-release in a "special edition", gleaming with several minutes of extra footage, a digitally remastered soundtrack, and some new special effects.

It was the spring of 1977 when Americans first encountered farm boy Luke Skywalker, two chatty robots, and a mercenary pilot called Han Solo, who helped to free Princess Leia's planet from the grip of the evil Empire forces. "Outstanding adventure-fantasy," said the trade paper *Variety*. "All-age appeal. Huge outlook."

Huge indeed: the film is now in the *Variety* hall of fame as the fourth-highest earner in movie history. Adjustment for inflation would probably place it at No. 2, below *Gone with the Wind*. But the success and importance of *Star Wars* is not simply a matter of box-office grosses. Nor is it a matter of the accumulated merchandise, from late 1970s T-shirts to the latest CD-Roms, or the volume of fans who have made Luke Skywalker, the villainous Darth Vader, or the



A Tunisian village becomes the raffish outpost of Mos Eisley in *Star Wars*, the film by George Lucas that changed the course of cinema — for good and bad

saintly Ben Obi-Wan Kenobi their lifelong friends. Many films, after all, generate sequels and intense devotion, and earn huge piles of money, but *Star Wars* changed the shape of cinema.

To put it bluntly, after *Star Wars* movies became larger, louder, more artificial and less adult. True, in the 1970s popular cinema was already retreating from intimacy and thoughtful characterisation, and moving towards awesome spectacle rigorously geared towards the widest possible audience. Aircraft, skyscrapers, ocean liners and Hollywood has-beens had been sabotaged, upturned, or burnt to a crisp in *The Towering Inferno*, *The Poseidon Adventure* and the *Alp* movies. Then, in 1975, *Jaws* raised viewers the quakes as a shark chomped up the supporting cast off the New England coast. Cinema as a mass entertainment was fighting its way back after being clobbered for decades by television.

But already there was a difference. The *Alp* brand of disaster movie was crafted by old-timers such as Irwin Allen, whose every thought was a cliché. *Jaws* was a young man's movie (its director, Steven Spielberg, was 27). The film was impish and self-aware, consciously playing with thriller traditions and the audience's feelings. George Lucas continued the "movie brat" tendency by creating in *Star Wars* a lavish homage to Saturday morning serials, *Flash Gordon*, especially, mixed in with elements

from westerns, the adventure writings of Edgar Rice Burroughs, and even Arthurian legend. At the time of shooting, Lucas was all of 32. To judge by his imagination, however, he was knocking on 12.

Star Wars firmly established the pattern of modern blockbuster cinema. Its legacy is everywhere. The kind of antics once filmed cheaply, aimed at children, and showed into serials or B-movies with a rough, crazy charm of their own are now presented in a hugely elaborate form, puffed up with self-importance and the latest Hollywood technology.

Twenty years ago, some critics commented that such endeavours tended to produce big, empty movies lacking any reverberations. The critic Pauline Kael termed *Star Wars* "an assemblage of spare parts... an epic without a dream".

This is now more true than ever, but over time our senses have become so deadened, our expectations so shrivelled, that too few audiences, critics or film-makers notice.

Within a few years of *Star Wars*, cinemas were swamped with all kinds of intergalactic and superhuman adventures. That same year, 1977, Spielberg offered *Close Encounters of the Third Kind*, a science-fiction epic that bucked the trend and did have a dream, and an intelligence. In 1978, mild-mannered Clark Kent became Superman again. Then, in 1981, Spielberg and Lucas generated a new action hero, Indiana Jones, played by Harrison Ford, the pilot from *Star Wars*: although nothing was really new about *Raiders of the Lost Ark* and its sequels.

But it was not *Star Wars* alone that drove the fashion for naive spectacle writ large. To make his film, Lucas established his own empire, away from Hollywood interference, and the excellence of his technicians created new standards for special effects. Lucas's company Industrial Light and Magic, formed specifically for *Star Wars* in 1975, paved the way for the creation of impossible sights through digital compositing rather than the established method of blending images on an optical printer. ILM remains the world leaders in visual effects, with 14 Oscars to prove it.

Skywalker Sound is another *Star Wars* offspring, enhancing mixing facilities for movie soundtracks, enabling the grandiose music of John Williams to make itself heard above screams, shrieks and exploding planets. The next step was to

ensure that theatres had equipment suited to convey such sonic bombardment: hence the THX sound system, inaugurated in 1983 in the second *Star Wars* sequel, *The Return of the Jedi*.

Laser beam battles, monolithic vessels creeping through the black night of space: *Star Wars* and ILM made their creation look so effortless. The latest technology has only increased the ease with which the fantasies can be realised and, in the *Star Wars* special edition, Lucas has reworked some scenes to take advantage of the new finesse. Computer technology is also lowering the cost of generating each visual effect. But budgets are not declining as a result: Hollywood is simply cramming more and more startling sights into movies to keep the audience transfixed.

There is another kind of price to pay for special effects-driven cinema: human beings lose out. The plot loses out. A film becomes a catalogue of visual stunts, edited for immediate impact. All was not lost in *Star Wars*, which still placed characters in the foreground, and spent considerable time on the cross-talking robots, R2-D2 and C-3PO, and the tug of loyalties between the humans.

But you can read the future in this film, for good and bad. A synthetic popular cinema that is super-efficient and knowing, but lacks the soul and imagination to generate true wonder. A cinema mistrustful of intelligence, afraid of quietness. A cinema of perpetual adolescence.

Star Wars opens on March 21. Special editions of *The Empire Strikes Back* and *Return of the Jedi* follow next month.

Sins of the father and the son

The building at 21 Dean Street used to be a synagogue above which, I'm told, there were rooms where people played whist. Now there are temporary stalls where the male worshippers once sat, a balcony where the women were segregated, and, no doubt, dressing rooms where ageing card-players sedately trumped each other.

Thanks to a grant from the lottery, the synagogue is in the process of being turned into a permanent theatre for one of our most enduring fringe companies. Several years after it moved from W1 to Lisson Grove, the Soho Theatre Company is back where it belongs, in the tacky old heart of Soho itself.

I wish I could be more than 60 or 70 per cent enthusiastic about the opening production that Soho's artistic director, Abigail Morris, is staging in its new home. Lin Coughlan, who can create a strongish character and turn a sharpish line, is clearly the sort of dramatist the company exists to encourage. But *Waking* is one of those father-and-son dramas, more often found in America than here, which tend to get summed up as sensitive: meaning that it gently ruffles the mind but does

not seize the heart or fill the stomach. It might almost be a Martin McDonagh play with the black comedy extracted. Like his *Cripple of Inishmaan*, it is set in the extreme west of Ireland, and, like his *Beauty Queen of Leenane*, it is about a parent and child deeply at odds. Steve Nicolson's Michael is bringing his 13-year-old son, Brian (Lee Turnbull), from England on a duty visit to his father, Sean (James Greene).



One-note hostility from Steve Nicolson's Michael, and some much-needed variety from Nicola Redmond as Sarah

THEATRE

Waking
21 Dean Street

The old man is a stonemason, a trade that allows Tom Piper to litter an Irish counterpoint of the American back porch with cemetery sculpture, and he seems a pleasant enough coddler. But Michael, a macho sailor lately invalidated out of the Royal Navy with a shattered leg, can barely speak to him, so embittered is he by the vaguely evoked sins Sean committed years ago.

Certainly, Michael's one-note hostility would become

intolerable were it not for the former nun from next door. Sarah is not a deeply explained or explored character, either, but she is finely acted by Nicola Redmond and she introduces some much-needed variety into the evening.

She also gives the first act a quaintly old-fashioned curtain-line. Enter Michael, who has been searching a cupboard for a hurley stick: "It's piled high with Sarah's clothes. How long have you two been living together?" Shock, horror — or rather, mild, minor surprise.

Is or isn't there one of those reconciliation scenes mandatory in American father-and-son back-porch plays? Does or doesn't sentiment or sentimentality find its way onstage? I wish Coughlan had made me care more about the answers to these questions.

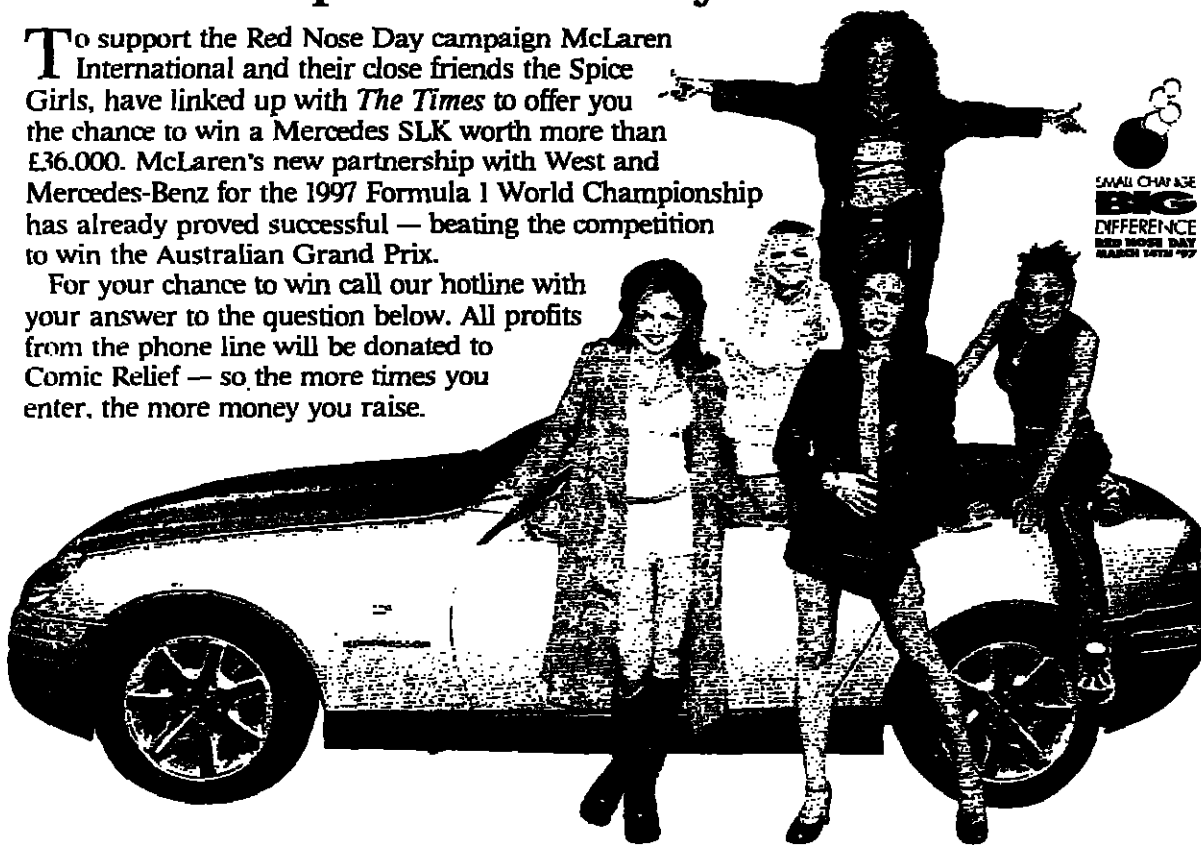
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Dynamic, bright, personable PA required to join a highly motivated team with its sights set on world-wide success. The successful candidate will assist one of the founding directors, in his day to day activities of managing the business and developing export markets. The role will involve daily liaison with staff, export customers and franchisees, and the organisation of foreign travel and exhibitions.

The ideal candidate will be proficient in Word and Excel and have a minimum typing speed of 50wpm (audio and copy). Shorthand would also be an advantage. Attention to detail and first class organisation skills are of paramount importance. A second language would be useful, discretion and integrity essential.

We are looking to recruit quickly so please send a copy of your Curriculum Vitae (including present salary details) to Helen Wood, 48-50 Chepstow Place, London W2 4TB.

Opportunities in Paediatrics

We have two opportunities for experienced medical secretaries to work in the busy and exciting environment of Royal Brompton Hospital's Paediatric Directorate, caring for children with a variety of heart and lung diseases and their families.

PA/Secretary to Paediatric Cardiologist
Salary: £15,400 - £17,700 depending on experience ref: HB/14/1
The postholder will support the Consultant in his NHS, research and private practice work providing a first class personal assistant service.

Secretary to 2 Part-time Paediatric Consultants
Salary: £13,000 - £15,200 depending on experience ref: HB/14/1
This is a new position supporting two newly appointed Consultants to develop their research and NHS service.

Both the above posts require excellent communication skills, both written and oral, good word processing (ideally Word for Windows) and audio typing skills. Knowledge of spreadsheets and experience of graphics packages would be desirable. You should possess good time management skills and the ability to work under pressure and to take initiative where appropriate.

Application form and job description available from Ruth or Clare, Human Resources Department, Royal Brompton Hospital, Sydney Street, London SW3 6NP. Tel: 0171 351 8865 (out of hours answerphone). Please quote the appropriate reference number. Closing date: 25 March 1997.

YOUR OPPORTUNITY TO LOBBY!

A S Biss & Co is a fast expanding political and public affairs consultancy looking for intelligent, experienced people who enjoy a challenge.

OFFICE MANAGER £26,500

To ensure the smooth running of the office with particular emphasis on creating office systems. The role will also entail personnel, IT management including support for Office Professional software and, initially, some bookkeeping.

SENIOR SECRETARY £22,000

To give support to the Chairman and the Managing Director. A knowledge of politics and experience with public affairs companies or a background of working with MPs, lawyers or in corporate PR will be useful. Sound knowledge of PowerPoint very desirable and shorthand will be an advantage.

The ideal candidates will be

- Experienced, well organised and able to work under pressure.
- Self motivated, with the ability to prioritise.
- Good, presentable communicators.

To apply, send your CV to Jan Chapman, A S Biss & Co, 8 Wilfred Street, London SW1E 6PL. Tel 0171 828 3030. NO AGENCIES.

(We are committed to equal opportunities).

Tel: 0171 680 6806

La Crème de la Crème

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YEARSCrone Corkill
Recruitment ConsultantsHigh Flyers
South Kensington
£18-20,000

Are you tired of travelling to the city everyday? Why bother when you can get the city buzz in one of the smartest areas in London. A charming, young Director of this successful international finance company urgently needs your top secretarial and administrative support. If you are team-spirited with Word, Excel & 60wpm typing, aged 24-29, call Sue Garwood on 0171 434 4512.

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Recruitment ConsultantsTip Top PA
Law Firm, EC4
to £25,000

An excellent opportunity for a PA, with legal experience, to work for the Managing Partner of this prestigious and progressive company. In this lynchpin role you will assist and support your boss with all aspects of his demanding position. The combination of your first class organisational skills and excellent time management will secure your success. Skills: 60wpm/Word for Windows. Age: 30-45. Please call Sarah Bart on 0171 390 7000.

CELEBRATING
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YEARSCrone Corkill
Recruitment ConsultantsStart Up
Situation
to £21,000

Exciting opportunity for an ambitious computer literate secretary or a junior administrator to join this expanding financial firm. You will provide secretarial and admin support to two managers, learn about the business and get fully involved. You must be a self starter who is bright, confident and proactive. Skills: Word, Excel, Powerpoint and Lotus Notes. Age: 22-40. Please call Katy Burke on 0171 390 7000.

CELEBRATING
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Recruitment ConsultantsFamous Name
West End
to £22,000 + bens

Successful international Management Consultants presents opportunity to move out of mainstream secretarial work. As Administration Services Analyst you will act as lynchpin for visitors, coordinating work areas, providing technical support and maintaining company protocol at all times. Secretarial skills including copy and audio typing and knowledge of Microsoft Office essential. Call Alison Scott on 0171 434 4512.

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£25,000 Package

This leading international natural resources organisation requires a senior level Executive. As a result of previous board level experience in a large company as well as superior coordination and administrative skills will be essential for arranging overseas directors' meetings, handling confidential material and liaising with staff at all levels, in all areas of the world. You will want to develop a strong working relationship with your young, progressive boss and to take full advantage of the delegated responsibilities which you will be given. Skills of 100wpm will also be necessary to develop this intensive and rewarding 1:1 role in a company which invests in its people.

Angela Mortimer is an equal opportunities employer.

All applicants are positively welcomed.

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£21,000 + Benefits

Based in Central London this international company is looking to recruit outstanding Team Secretaries to work with their global management teams. Your Manager will travel a great deal requiring the organisation of complex business itineraries. Working on your own initiative within a high pressure environment you will use your excellent secretarial and communication skills to provide outstanding support to the customer focused industry. You will be responsible for managing and prioritising your workload and it is therefore imperative that the successful candidate is keen to develop in these areas. Skills of 55wpm typing, Word, Excel and PowerPoint are essential.

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All applicants are positively welcomed.

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Dynamo!
to £16,000

Willing and enthusiastic second jobber required to support this busy team of recruitment consultants. Providing secretarial support at senior level you will produce reports and tenders, liaise with candidates and assist in all areas of the recruitment process. With a year's experience you must have strong administrative skills and pay careful attention to detail. Age: 20-24. Please call Vanessa Mitchell on 0171 390 7000.

Crone Corkill
Recruitment Consultants

MS OFFICE - TEMP SECRETARIES

Our prestigious clients based in City / West End / Docklands seek experienced secretaries for short and long-term bookings. If you have shown (in useful) WPM, Powerpoint or Excel skills and are looking for a temp team as friendly and efficient as you are, Call Jo Harvey at Tate Appointments on 0171 408 0423 for an immediate interview.

Tate
TEMP SPECIALISTS

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The CEO of a major American Company operates worldwide out of Paris and needs a French-speaking PA to act as the focal point of contact for him.

0171 629 9323
DIRECTORS' SECRETARIES

TEAM SECRETARIES/ADMINISTRATORS
INDEPENDENT ESTATE AGENCY

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Salary according to age and experience. 'A' Level education preferred.

Please write with c.v. to: Mrs. Kate Clark, Wickworth, 118 Kensington Church Street, London, W8 4BH. No agencies.

WA £27k + Bkg Bens

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Exceptional opportunity for a career minded PA to work for this seriously successful man who is a driving force in one of the world's most prestigious Finance Houses. To organise social events, co-ordinate high profile projects and manage highly confidential work, you will have stamina, energy and drive. You will be a qualified secretary with a minimum of 5 years' experience using your fast typing and PC skills.

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Your ability to juggle priorities and think on your feet will also be a vital asset in achieving success. You need to be able to organise your own time and workload efficiently, and you must be able to remain calm and cheerful throughout the busiest of days.

We can provide you with continual long term work in many varying business areas where you will be recognised for your ability and have the opportunity to develop your career in a forward thinking professional services organisation.

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New position in a friendly firm of underwriters, would suit efficient PA capable of setting up systems and organising two busy houses. Applicants must have shorthand (80wpm) and be happy to take minutes, 50wpm typing + W4Ws. Regular hours.

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Based in stunning W End offices, this company requires a secretary with W4Ws, Excel + min 60wpm typing. Cheerful, flexible and helpful personality for this sometimes pressured role.

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Publishing Personnel
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The Language Business
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Fax: 0171-379 0624

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£20,000 + BONUS + 5 WEEKS HOLS

The Director of this top profile company seeks a Bi-Lingual PA 22+ who will assist him in his very busy and varied day, whilst at the same time doing a percentage of the PA duties for the Managing Director including his personal work. Good secretarial skills, fluent French and shorthand are essential as well as a confident, outgoing personality. Please call Greta or fax CV to

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INSOLVENCY LITIGATION - secretary for major City law firm. W4W and over 65 wpm with a motivated and flexible approach. £20,000 + good benefits.

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PARALEGAL with experience of finance and/or banking law. This law firm need an intelligent and motivated team player and will offer in the region of £18,000.

PROFESSIONAL FLOAT with advanced WP3.1 and good legal experience covering all the core areas to work for Fleet Street law firm. 80 wpm + to earn £20,000 + benefits.

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Our areas of expertise are television, film, publishing, PR, advertising, the Arts and entertainment - register with us and beat the crowd!

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For further details, please call
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If you have typing skills - minimum of 50wpm and strong WP experience WORD and EXCEL/POWERPOINT or have proven S/Bd exp call now for immediate appointment and work.

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Have you a sense of fun & a spirit of adventure? Super opportunity for a polished & socially aware PA to work for a famous, flexible body. Your day will be exciting & involved talking with interior designers & celebrities, co-ordinating these residences & ensuring the smooth day to day running of this high profile person. SHI min 40wpm age 20+ - 40's.

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Young, smart secretary with good age skills to assist Personnel Manager of major Publishing House. Must be able to handle the job requires initiative, discretion, some travel experience, and an ability to work at £14-15,000 plus some benefits.

Rodgers & Ellingham (Rec Recs)
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If you are well organised, outgoing with excellent interpersonal skills and a financial background, then this challenging position in the rapidly expanding area of equities finance could be for you. 60wpm typing, W4W/Powerpoint.

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Executive PA to support a senior
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Defeat robs Dalglish of his only defence

Well-oiled machine

RUGBY UNION: An investment of £160,000 over four years and the introduction of an under-16s competition have resulted in entries for the Shell UK National Schools Sevens increasing from 234 squads in 1989, when Shell began its involvement, to 383. The tournament next week at Roesslyn Park will feature 753 games over four days

An uncompromising legend of Welsh sport

Wilf Wooller, who died yesterday aged 84, earned a legendary status in the annals of Welsh sport. He was a great Wales rugby player and was an immense presence for 40 years as a player and an administrator — and for most of that time a presiding spirit — for Glamorgan County Cricket Club.

He was of a kind which we are unlikely to see again. Born with a keen eye for the flight and tumble of a ball of any shape or size, he was given the age in which he lived, able to practise his gifts and to perform at first-class level without hesitation or interruption. He was from a Cornishian mould. Rugby, cricket, football and squash all came within his

Gerald Davies pays tribute to the great Wilf Wooller, a colossus of cricket and rugby union in the Principality

by for Cardiff and Wales — he was capped 18 times — in the winter, to playing cricket for his beloved Glamorgan, whom he led to the county championship in 1948, in the summer.

He loved sport with a passion. If he was Corinthian, his mood was not carefree. There was a tough edge to him. His kind of sportsmanship embraced a keen degree of gamesmanship or brinkmanship, call it what you will, which, to some eyes, brought

into question the fairness of his play. He did not, however, go beyond the rules of any game. But the game was there for the winning, what else? Physically, he was a large and commanding figure. He could dominate a room even in his later years. In talent and personality, too, he was larger than life. Expressing his opinion in a firm, stentorian voice, some were led to believe that he did not suffer fools gladly. This was a mistaken perspective. He did hold strong beliefs

— for instance, in favour of retaining contact with apartheid South Africa — but he always listened carefully to what others had to say. If others disagreed with him, then he only wished them to respect his view.

In fact, he thrived on others standing up to him. The intense competition on the field could happily extend to the hot debate in the bar, the radio studio or in his newspaper columns. This was sport by another means. Wooller was opinionated but this served to add to the colour, tension and vigour of his conversation. He had to be true to himself.

He was an extraordinary man. To sit next to him in the

press box watching, say, Cardiff play Llanelli, was to delight in his running commentary on a game. What one heard was not necessarily about the immediate action, but a record of the sequence of play, the personalities and humour of a match played between the same two clubs some half a century ago. He loved to reminisce, but never about the horrendous experiences, which he shared with his great Cardiff friend, the late Les Spence, as a prisoner of war in the Far East. That was forbidden territory, best left buried. In that sense, also, he was a unique presence and a remarkable man.

Obituary, page 21

CRICKET

Sussex chairman outlines case against revolution

By Simon Wilde

KEN HOPKINS, the new chairman of Sussex, attempted to draw a line under the club's troubles yesterday by arguing that he was the man to take the county forward, beyond the forthcoming and potentially divisive annual and extraordinary meetings.

The 63-year-old had few words of comfort for Alan Wells, the dismissed captain, or for the younger generation — not confined to those involved in Sussex — who believe cricket management should reside with those closer to the game and modern business.

At an early morning press conference at Hove, Hopkins outlined his views, most of them responses to criticisms from Tony Pigott, a former player who is demanding the resignation of the entire committee. Hopkins stressed his business experience (a marketing career with Seaboard) and that he has never been a "yes man" in 13 years on the committee. "I intend to make my views known," he said.

Pigott, 38, wants places on the board for himself and men such as Don Transmire, a director of Marks and Spencer who has invested money in the young players at the club, and Roger Dakin, who has a background in public relations, but Hopkins says Pigott's actions are unnecessary and ill-timed. "I have no idea what his plans are but I am prepared to meet him," Hopkins said. "I'm ready for a fight."

Hopkins's predecessor,

Alan Caffyn, resigned last week after a member of the committee, Richard Barrow, accused it of being "inward looking", a charge that the new chairman rejected. Hopkins also reiterated Caffyn's criticisms of Wells, which so incensed Pigott and Martin Speight, who left last month to join Durham.

"Alan Wells did not motivate the players to win," he said.

He expected everyone else to play to the same standard as himself. He lost confidence in them and they lost confidence in him. There was a lack of respect. The young players have an opportunity now and I am confident they will rise to the challenge under Peter Moores."

Pigott's plans have been welcomed by Nick Cook, the former England bowler and Northamptonshire second XI coach, who believes that all county clubs must be run by

young men rather than the "fuddy-duddies" who, he believes, populate so many committees.

"This is a perfect opportunity for Sussex to go leaping into the 21st century under a young vibrant chairman with good financial backing," Cook said. "The situation has only come about through unrest among players and Tony has Sussex's interests at heart. It is not a bad example to the other counties and is only the sort of thing that has happened in rugby union and league."

Too many committees are peopled by old fuddy-duddies who don't watch their teams for most of the season but whose main job is to hire and fire players come the third Thursday in August. It is an antiquated system. Some committees may consult their managers and assistant coaches, but cricket is still living in the dark ages. We need aggressive marketing and chairmen — or rather paid managing directors — with charisma and clout."

Sussex hope that Hopkins's appointment will deter the normally conservative Sussex members from agreeing to Pigott's call for further resignations, but the spate of departures this winter is believed to have angered many. Brian Close, the former England captain, resigned yesterday from Yorkshire's cricket committee in favour of a place on the public relations committee. "I will be able to express myself more freely," he said.



Pigott proposals

WORD-WATCHING

Answers from page 42

DROSHKY

(a) A kind of vehicle. Originating from Russia. Properly a Russian low four-wheeled carriage without a top, consisting of a narrow bench on which the passengers sit astride or sideways, have their feet resting on bars near the ground. Hence transferred to other vehicles in use elsewhere. In some German towns the name of the ordinary four-wheelers or fiacres plying for hire.

EVESCHIE

(b) A French bishopric. From the Latin *episcopatus* having been made a bishop. "With three eveschies depid diocesis and cities in that duchie."

YMETE

(c) To meet, meet with or encounter. From the Old English *ymetan*, c. 1300. "The man that the hare ymete. Ne shall him never be the bet."

ZYMURGY

(d) The practice or art of fermentation, as in wine-making, brewing and distilling. From the Greek *zume* = "souring working, as in metallurgy."

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(11.12.13.14.15.16.17.18.19.20.21.22.23.24.25.26.27.28.29.30.31.32.33.34.35.36.37.38.39.40.41.42.43.44.45.46.47.48.49.50.51.52.53.54.55.56.57.58.59.60.61.62.63.64.65.66.67.68.69.70.71.72.73.74.75.76.77.78.79.80.81.82.83.84.85.86.87.88.89.90.91.92.93.94.95.96.97.98.99.100.101.102.103.104.105.106.107.108.109.110.111.112.113.114.115.116.117.118.119.120.121.122.123.124.125.126.127.128.129.130.131.132.133.134.135.136.137.138.139.140.141.142.143.144.145.146.147.148.149.150.151.152.153.154.155.156.157.158.159.160.161.162.163.164.165.166.167.168.169.170.171.172.173.174.175.176.177.178.179.180.181.182.183.184.185.186.187.188.189.190.191.192.193.194.195.196.197.198.199.200.201.202.203.204.205.206.207.208.209.210.211.212.213.214.215.216.217.218.219.220.221.222.223.224.225.226.227.228.229.230.231.232.233.234.235.236.237.238.239.240.241.242.243.244.245.246.247.248.249.250.251.252.253.254.255.256.257.258.259.260.261.262.263.264.265.266.267.268.269.270.271.272.273.274.275.276.277.278.279.280.281.282.283.284.285.286.287.288.289.290.291.292.293.294.295.296.297.298.299.300.301.302.303.304.305.306.307.308.309.310.311.312.313.314.315.316.317.318.319.320.321.322.323.324.325.326.327.328.329.330.331.332.333.334.335.336.337.338.339.340.341.342.343.344.345.346.347.348.349.350.351.352.353.354.355.356.357.358.359.360.361.362.363.364.365.366.367.368.369.370.371.372.373.374.375.376.377.378.379.380.381.382.383.384.385.386.387.388.389.390.391.392.393.394.395.396.397.398.399.400.401.402.403.404.405.406.407.408.409.410.411.412.413.414.415.416.417.418.419.420.421.422.423.424.425.426.427.428.429.430.431.432.433.434.435.436.437.438.439.440.441.442.443.444.445.446.447.448.449.450.451.452.453.454.455.456.457.458.459.460.461.462.463.464.465.466.467.468.469.470.471.472.473.474.475.476.477.478.479.480.481.482.483.484.485.486.487.488.489.490.491.492.493.494.495.496.497.498.499.500.501.502.503.504.505.506.507.508.509.510.511.512.513.514.515.516.517.518.519.520.521.522.523.524.525.526.527.528.529.530.531.532.533.534.535.536.537.538.539.540.541.542.543.544.545.546.547.548.549.550.551.552.553.554.555.556.557.558.559.560.561.562.563.564.565.566.567.568.569.570.571.572.573.574.575.576.577.578.579.580.581.582.583.584.585.586.587.588.589.590.591.592.593.594.595.596.597.598.599.600.601.602.603.604.605.606.607.608.609.610.611.612.613.614.615.616.617.618.619.620.621.622.623.624.625.626.627.628.629.630.631.632.633.634.635.636.637.638.639.640.641.642.643.644.645.646.647.648.649.650.651.652.653.654.655.656.657.658.659.660.661.662.663.664.665.666.667.668.669.670.671.672.673.674.675.676.677.678.679.680.681.682.683.684.685.686.687.688.689.690.691.692.693.694.695.696.697.698.699.700.701.702.703.704.705.706.707.708.709.710.711.712.713.714.715.716.717.718.719.720.721.722.723.724.725.726.727.728.729.730.731.732.733.734.735.736.737.738.739.740.741.742.743.744.745.746.747.748.749.750.751.752.753.754.755.756.757.758.759.760.761.762.763.764.765.766.767.768.769.770.771.772.773.774.775.776.777.778.779.780.781.782.783.784.785.786.787.788.789.790.791.792.793.794.795.796.797.798.799.800.801.802.803.804.805.806.807.808.809.810.811.812.813.814.815.816.817.818.819.820.821.822.823.824.825.826.827.828.829.830.831.832.833.834.835.836.837.838.839.840.841.842.843.844.845.846.847.848.849.850.851.852.853.854.855.856.857.858.859.860.861.862.863.864.865.866.867.868.869.870.871.872.873.874.875.876.877.878.879.880.881.882.883.884.885.886.887.888.889.890.891.892.893.894.895.896.897.898.899.900.901.902.903.904.905.906.907.908.909.910.911.912.913.914.915.916.917.918.919.920.921.922.923.924.925.926.927.928.929.930.931.932.933.934.935.936.937.938.939.940.941.942.943.944.945.946.947.948.949.950.951.952.953.954.955.956.957.958.959.960.961.962.963.964.965.966.967.968.969.970.971.972.973.974.975.976.977.978.979.980.981.982.983.984.985.986.987.988.989.990.991.992.993.994.995.996.997.998.999.1000.1001.1002.1003.1004.1005.1006.1007.1008.1009.1010.1011.1012.1013.1014.1015.1016.1017.1018.1019.1020.1021.1022.1023.1024.1025.1026.1027.1028.1029.1030.1031.1032.1033.1034.1035.1036.1037.1038.1039.1040.1041.1042.1043.1044.1045.1046.1047.1048.1049.1050.1051.1052.1053.1054.1055.1056.1057.1058.1059.1060.1061.1062.1063.1064.1065.1066.1067.1068.1069.1070.1071.1072.1073.1074.1075.1076.1077.1078.1079.1080.1081.1082.1083.1084.1085.1086.1087.1088.1089.1090.1091.1092.1093.1094.1095.1096.1097.1098.1099.1100.1101.1102.1103.1104.1105.1106.1107.1108.1109.1110.1111.1112.1113.1114.1115.1116.1117.1118.1119.1120.1121.1122.1123.1124.1125.1126.1127.1128.1129.1130.1131.1132.1133.1134.1135.1136.1137.1138.1139.1140.1141.1142.1143.1144.1145.1146.1147.1148.1149.1150.1151.1152.1153.1154.1155.1156.1157.1158.1159.1160.1161.1162.1163.1164.1165.1166.1167.1168.1169.1170.1171.1172.1173.1174.1175.1176.1177.1178.1179.1180.1181.1182.1183.1184.1185.1186.1187.1188.1189.1190.1191.1192.1193.1194.1195.1196.1197.1198.1199.1200.1201.1202.1203.1204.1205.1206.1207.1208.1209.1210.1211.1212.1213.1214.1215.1216.1217.1218.1219.1220.1221.1222.1223.1224.1225.12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No reason to panic: you are not a clone

When Dolly the cloned sheep took over the front pages as a novel change from the mad cow, there was a rush to assure us that cloning humans was illegal as well as unthinkable. And, anyway, there were scientific reasons why cloning Saddam Hussein, for example, would be impossible.

Unfortunately these assumptions are not all that comforting, if the distinguished line-up assembled last night for *Network First: All in the Genes* (ITV) is to be believed. In the course of the programme somebody mentioned Frankenstein, as one knew they would, but this particular evocation of a fictional extravagance had some point to it.

Like Frankenstein, most scientists are neither malevolent nor mad. He, and they, set out to advance mankind but there is always the possibility that the work of science will take on a life of

its own. Genes, by their very nature, have an independent streak. Most of the scientists on show for this absorbing and sober documentary took the view that because all genes are altered by the environment in which they develop, it would be impossible to clone Saddam. By the time you knew you wanted to do it, it would be too late: he would already be an adult and therefore unlike the foetal Saddam we were trying to replicate.

Yet we also heard that our new friend Dolly was cloned from a "mature" sheep, therefore if Dolly is an exact replica of her genetic source, the scientists who produced Dolly have already answered the question of whether a gene altered by maturity can be copied in its mature form. The answer is yes.

The other startling factor raised in the film had to do with City speculators "investing" in genes. Apparently the scientists who created

Dolly have applied to patent their procedure, which I suppose is fair enough. But what about the fact that others are patenting individual genes, just in case they turn out to be a nice little earner, sorry, a source of human enlightenment?

If this starts to look like a privatised gene pool, with having enough money the only condition for being allowed to dive in, resist panic: cloning tyrants and selling genes on the London commodities market are far from the core issues in genealogy. *Network First* was movingly correct in talking to real families with children stricken by inherited diseases: how far should science be allowed to go in removing or altering genes? This is the million-pound question. It offers no glib answers but it does require mature public debate.

The transatlantic trade in comedy clones has been active for

REVIEW



Peter Barnard

many a long year, with what might be called mixed results. *Mad About You* is an American sitcom, still in the ratings over there and running on satellite over here, which now gains a British version called *Loved By You* (ITV). If the original is half-decent, it is a lot better than *Loved By You*. The stars are John Gordon Sinclair and Trevyn McDowell as a couple who have been married

for five months and find that the sexual spark has dimmed. The series is apparently about their attempts to rekindle it, though the idea was straining my attention halfway through one episode.

Several stereotypes familiar from more than 5,000 other series drift in and out of the action: a dull married couple, a boorish bloke, a freighting sister. I wrote down one funny line, when McDowell says to his wife, "I wish the dog can breathe and Sinclair says: 'It's a flat, not a Volvo.'" What has happened to television sitcom? With a couple of exceptions, the BBC seems to have given up looking for new ideas in favour of repeats while the commercial companies plough such a narrow contextual furrow that one is left gasping at its sheer ordinariness.

Timewatch, BBC's history series, has never been short of plaudits and it is presently at the peak of its powers. Last night's

Secret Memories, the story of the Special Operations Executive in the Second World War was made thoroughly absorbing by the usual *Timewatch* qualities: attention to detail and meticulous research.

The men and women who blew up railway lines and otherwise made life difficult for the Nazis are genuine heroes, a truth made more obvious last night by the matter-of-fact style of those who survived. They were loners in an alien landscape, which is a frightening enough condition even if you are not caught.

Tony Brooks spent the war in lodgings near Lyons, organising the sabotage of transport, mainly railways. Local help was at first unwilling, but it became more so as the Resistance grew. Brooks saved the engine had passed, thus saving the lives of the (French) crew. Small things brought big re-

sults. Brooks recalled an operative known as Peggie, who would change the waybills on goods wagons so that acid meant for the batteries in U-boats would end up, uselessly, at an army barracks while submarine engineers wondered why they had been sent carburettor parts.

Brian Stonehouse was also at Lyons as a radio operator and *Timewatch* reunited him with the owner of a chateau from which he had sent vital intelligence and where he was later captured and sent to a concentration camp. He survived, as did a woman agent whose tasks included planting exploding rats in the corners of factories and putting itching powder in German underwear.

Eisenhower said that in France alone the Resistance had the equivalent of five extra divisions. These were, and are, magnificent people, a better argument for cloning than Dolly the sheep.

BBC1

- 6.00am Business Breakfast (53015)
- 7.00 BBC Breakfast News (1) (41183)
- 9.00 Breakfast News Extra (ITV) (5243270)
- 9.20 Sky Challenge (4507947)
- 9.45 Kilroy (4270812)
- 10.00 Can't Cook, Won't Cook (93473)
- 11.00 News (1) and weather (8203903)
- 11.05 The Really Useful Show (7815638)
- 11.35 Change That (483270)
- 12.00 News (1) and weather (7357638)
- 12.05 pm The Alphabet Game (5381541)
- 12.30 Going for a Song (8668909)
- 12.55 The Weather Show (7972473)
- 1.00 One O'Clock News (1) (44270)
- 1.30 Regional News (83409218)
- 1.40 Neighbours A love-struck Steve tries to win Dani's affections (1) (11796728)
- 2.05 Police Rescue Angel puts his neck on the line for an old friend who's fallen on hard times (2254583)
- 2.55 As Time Goes By (1) (5021947)
- 3.25 Well Wishes A Visit (1008724)
- 3.30 Playdays (5258454) 3.50 ChuckieVision (5278218) 4.00 Popeye and Son (125744) 4.35 The Wild House (5295331)
- 5.00 Newsround (1) (2562034)
- 5.10 Blue Peter (1) (9060855)
- 5.35 Neighbours (1) (1) (8036339)
- 6.00 Six O'Clock News (947)
- 6.30 Regional News (293)
- 7.00 Noel's Telly Years 1968 (8164)
- 7.30 Tomorrow's World Shahzad Pakravan meets a group of prostitutes in Nairobi who have baffled scientists by remaining HIV-negative despite repeated exposure to the virus - could their seemingly natural resistance help to create a vaccine? Plus: Howard Stalder encounters a comical computer programmed to crack jokes (1) (183)
- 8.00 The National Lottery Live Music by the Backstreet Boys and a report from Jill Dando on how Lottery money is helping research into heart disease (521947)
- 8.15 25 Years of the Two Ronnies (1) (1) (317218)
- 8.50 Points of View (780334)
- 9.00 Nine O'Clock News (5299)
- 9.20 National Lottery Update (942102)
- 9.30 Insiders Tension erupts when new arrival to Venerable Jonathan Mason lets slip crucial information about Colin's daughter, leaving him in a state of shock and on the verge of a breakdown as he tries to come to terms with the revelation. With Julia Ford (951299)
- 10.20 Comic Relief: Walk on By Leroy Henry sees how money donated to Comic Relief helps the homeless, going behind the scenes at The London Connection (3014270)
- 11.25 Femme Fatale (1991) Erotic thriller, starring Colin Firth. Directed by Andre Goutard (384367)
- 12.05 am Crazy from the Heart (1991) With Christine Lahti and Ruben Blades. Directed by Thomas Schlamme (1) (5035023)
- 2.25 Weather (8247752)

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BBC2

- 6.00am Open University: Edison - the Invention of Invention (5310265) 6.50 Hilarious Mechanisms (9020347) 7.15 Sea Hike Breakfast News (7192725) 7.30 Captain Caveman and the Teen Angels (8953367) 7.55 Record Breakers Gold (1) (3255441) 8.20 Teddy Trucks (3681812) 8.25 Spot (6064096) 8.35 The Record (591725)
- 9.00 Jeunes Francophones (4585725) 9.25 See You, See Me (5260947) 9.45 Words and Pictures (7034183) 10.00 Playdays (36753) 10.20 Numberline (7055828) 10.45 Go for It (7053183) 11.00 Around Scotland (8248164) 11.20 Music Makers (9131812) 11.40 Science in Action (9013368) 12.00 Spanish Globo (7348880) 12.05pm History Live (5388183) 12.30 Working Lunch (19809) 1.00 The Geography Programme (47508299) 1.20 Thunderbirds in French (68810164) 1.25 Zip Zag (47518034) 1.45 Come Outside (8486367) 2.00 Teddy Trucks (7335541) 2.05 Spot (27334812) 2.10 Everyone's Got One (2277588) 3.00 News (1) (8685021) 3.05 Westminster (4919744) 3.55 News (1) (8610036)
- 4.00 Today's the Day (812) 4.30 Ready, Steady, Go! (116) 5.00 Father (9270) 5.30 Seniors Pot Black (676)
- 6.00 Star Trek: The Next Generation (1) (1) (911582) 6.45 Trev and Simon's Transmission Impossible (456588)
- 7.00 Hancock (b/w) (1) (1) (9034)
- 7.30 Counterblast: Understanding the Monster Ray Wyrre presents a thought-provoking argument for the reform of the legal system which he says fails to protect children from sex abusers (1) (725)
- 8.00 University Challenge (1) (5454)
- 8.30 Changing Rooms (1) (1) (4589)



Here comes the bride (9pm)

- 9.00 Modern Times: Jewish Wedding Film following the fortunes of a couple planning a full Jewish wedding (1) (976831)
- 9.50 A Woman Called Smith: The Two Jeans A profile of two fun-loving, disco-dancing grandmothers from Essex (1) (828183)
- 10.00 Even Further Abroad with Jonathan Meades (1) (83096)
- 10.30 Newsnight (1) (37058)
- 11.15 This Life (1) (1) (805947) 11.55 Weather (13528)
- 12.00 The Midnight Hour (28139)
- 12.30 am Learning Zone: Open University - Rocky Shores (81110) 1.00 Tropical Forest (88374) 1.30 Managing for Effectiveness (54353) 2.00 Nightwatch TV: The Geography Collection (18435) 4.00 BBC Focus: English Heritage (27680) 4.30 Unleash in the Classroom (83139) 5.00 Health and Safety at Work (52771) 5.30 Voluntary Matters (2888)

CHOICE

- Counterblast: Understanding the Monster BBC2, 7.30pm
Ray Wyrre, who has worked with sex offenders for more than 20 years, argues that we should think beyond locking them up and throwing away the key. Attacking what he calls political rhetoric and quick-fix answers, he advocates treatment as well as punishment and preferably instead of it. Wyrre's concern is less with the small number of abusers who get caught than with the vast majority who do not. Much of the abuse is perpetrated not by monsters and pervers but by otherwise caring parents. Wyrre points to the success of counselling experiments in the United States and Canada and recommends that Britain should follow up an idea pioneered in Vermont. This is a free and confidential helpline which abusers are encouraged to call so that they can be assessed for treatment.
- An Inspector Calls: River Rage Channel 4, 8.30pm
To launch a second series about people whose job is to inspect things, we visit the Norfolk Broads. It is August Bank Holiday week, 40,000 visitors are expected and with only 14 inspectors for 125 miles of waterway, the cover is stretched. Nobody pretends that people drive boats as recklessly as they drive cars but there are enough incidents to suggest that "river rage" is starting to creep in. With inspectors thin on the water, riverbank residents such as Ralph Livingstone and Ken Fry, step in to ensure that the bylaws are obeyed. It is a moot point whether the inspectors prefer to deal with the miscreants or the venal Livingstone and Fry. The yellow card comes out only once, when Inspector Adrian Vernon delivers a written warning to young men who have been horsing around with water-filled condoms.
- Modern Times: Jewish Wedding BBC2, 9.00pm
The twist in Stephen Walker's film about the nuptials of Michaela and Steve is that she is Jewish and he is not. For the knot to be tied, he agrees to convert to the faith. This involves not only giving up his favourite bacon and being circumcised but having to face half an hour of tough questioning by a Jewish court. Walker is himself a Jew and while milking the subject for its passages of humour he is never irrelevant. Much of the footage is posed, with the leading characters doing set pieces before the cameras, but the mixture of stylisation and those spontaneous moments that no film-maker can plan for is surprisingly effective. These unfamiliar with a Jewish wedding may be astonished at the enormous amount of food that is provided. The bride's father is unrepentant and has the waistline to prove it.
- Dunblane: Remembering Our Children ITV, 9.00pm (Granada, Thursday 8.00pm)
The first anniversary of the Dunblane tragedy is marked by a documentary comprising the thoughts of the bereaved parents, presented without commentary. It is a far less distressing film than you might expect, not because anybody tries to minimise their loss but because the emphasis is on the positive. The parents in that unspeakable evil has helped to uncover uncommon goodness. One aspect of this is the extraordinary number of cards and messages of sympathy from all over the world. Another is the way the bereaved parents have bonded together through their weekly meetings. The film ends on a note of hope, with the parents finding strength in the future. Even showing vivid footage of the murdered children, poignant as it is, is an occasion for the celebration of a life rather than the mourning of death. Peter Waymark

HTV

- 6.00am GMTV (655438)
- 9.25 Chain Letters (4582638)
- 9.55 Regional News (1) weather (5374725)
- 10.00 The Time, The Place (30589)
- 10.30 This Morning (1) (88254294)
- 12.20pm Regional News (1) (7348522)
- 12.30 News (1) and weather (6863635)
- 12.55 Shortland Street (6661096)
- 1.25 Home and Away (1) (4756812)
- 1.50 Afternoon Live (11701657)
- 2.20 Vanessa (1) (56753164)
- 2.50 Afternoon Live (5017744)
- 3.20 News (1) (2353611)
- 3.25 Regional News (1) (3703152)
- 3.30 Tots TV (1513201) 3.40 The Blobs (9710454) 3.50 The Little Mermaid (5254638) 4.15 Dr Xargle (1) (1241183) 4.40 Cone Zone (4194218)
- 5.10 Look and Cook (5431299)
- 5.40 News (1) and weather (275015)
- 6.00 Home and Away Casey decides she cannot change Curtis and Selma remains secretive about her delayed return from Melbourne (1) (1) (76152)
- 6.25 HTV Weather (958833)
- 6.30 HTV News (37)
- 7.00 Emmerdale Frank faces the music in court. Ned meets an old flame and Vic makes a fool of himself in front of Kathy (1) (6560)



Phil Middlemiss as Des (7.30pm)

- 7.30 Coronation Street Samantha teaches Des a lesson which throws his life into disarray and Jack grows more suspicious of Trisha's new boyfriend (1) (251)
- 8.00 The Bill: In the Dark in the wake of a burglary, a wife's evidence leads Skease to suspect her husband is a serial killer. The challenge facing the CID is to find her evidence without alerting her to their suspicions (6285)
- 9.00 Dunblane: Remembering Our Children (1) (7809)
- 10.00 News at Ten (1) and weather (70522)
- 10.30 Regional News (1) and weather (745909)
- 10.40 Coronation Sport Middlebrough v Stockport County. Bob Wilson introduces coverage of the Coca-Cola Cup, a final second leg. Commentary from Brian Moore (845216)
- 11.40 Taggart: Secrets George Proctor is questioned about the murder of Jake Koslewski, while Cameron Friel is attacked (1) (1) (771454)
- 12.40am Dating the Enemy (5007961)
- 1.40am Stacy's Knights (1983). A comedy starring Kevin Connolly, directed by Jim Wilson (1) (1) (54333)
- 3.30 Not Fade Away (73690)
- 4.30 The Time, The Place (1) (70665)
- 5.00 Coronation Street (1) (1) (56597)
- 5.30 ITN Morning News (16394)

CENTRAL

- As HTV West except:
12.55pm-1.25 A Country Practice (6661096)
5.10-5.40 Shortland Street (5431299)
6.25-7.00 Central News (94909)
10.40 Coca-Cola Cup Highlights The best of the action from the second leg semi-final match between Middlebrough and Stockport County (845218)
11.40 Taggart: Episode two of the three-part drama George Proctor is questioned about the murder of Jake Koslewski, while Cameron Friel is attacked (202808)
1.45am Shed 7: Live at the Forum. The top band perform before a 2,000-strong audience in Kenilworth, North London (453077)
2.45 The Chart Show (4179752)
3.40 Central Jobfinder '97 (552329)
5.20 Asian Eye (8183771)

WESTCOUNTRY

- As HTV West except:
12.20pm-12.30 Illuminations (7346522)
12.55-1.25 Emmerdale (6861096)
5.10-5.40 Home and Away (5431299)
6.00-7.00 Westcountry Live (14454)

MERIDIAN

- As HTV West except:
12.55-1.25 A Country Practice (6661096)
5.10-5.40 Home and Away (5431299)
6.00 Meridian Tonight (265)
6.30-7.00 Home Truths (367)
5.00am FreeScreen (5897)

ANGLIA

- As HTV West except:
12.19pm Anglia Air Watch (7365657)
12.55-1.25 A Country Practice (6661096)
5.10-5.40 Shortland Street (5431299)
6.23 Anglia Weather (958522)
6.25-7.00 Anglia News (94909)
10.29 Anglia Air Watch (144893)

SAT

- Starts: 6.00am Sesame Street (46725)
7.00 The Big Breakfast (34883)
9.00 The Morning Line (97290)
9.30 Yagellon (778908)

12.00 House to House (54873)

- 12.30pm Elton (37305)
1.00 Snot Melthrin (37980)
1.30 Racing from Cheltenham (955152)
4.30 Wild Britain: Seeds of Change. A new six-part series exploring Britain's flora and fauna (184)

5.00 S Pump (1638)

- 5.30 Countdown (744)
6.00 Newyddion (63541)
6.05 Hemo (410638)
6.35 Jacpot (902183)
7.00 Pabyl y Cwm (130298)
7.25 Fflemlo (883725)
8.00 Hawilo (562)
8.30 Newyddion (9657)
9.00 Spin City (8909)
9.30 Roseanne (17541)
10.00 Brookside (679102)
10.35 ER (823096)
11.30 Cheltenham Festival Highlights (27015)

12.00 Under the Moon (259554)

- 2.30am NBA XFL Basketball action from America (54416)
4.00 Yagellon (1232400)

CHANNEL 4

- 6.00am Sesame Street (46725) 7.00 The Big Breakfast (34883) 9.00 The Morning Line (97290) A preview of the second day of the Cheltenham Festival (97299)
- 9.30 Schools (1) (778909)
- 12.00 House to House Reports from Westminster (54873) 12.30pm The War of the Roses. The inset friends and enemies of the rose grower (1) (73705) 1.00 Elton American comedy series (37980)
- 1.30 Racing from Cheltenham Brough Scott introduces live coverage of the 2.00, 2.35 (Queen Mother Champion Chase), 3.15 and 3.55 races (895152)
- 4.30 Countdown (1) (164) 5.00 Ricki Lake (1) (1638) 5.30 Pot Rescue (1) (744)
- 6.00 Party of Five After Callie is saved from date rape by Bailey, she becomes increasingly dependent on him (1) (616170)
- 6.50 Fresh Pop (608657)
- 7.00 Channel 4 News includes headlines and weather at 7.30 (354299)
- 7.55 Winners and Losers (814909)
- 8.00 Brookside Gladys has some devastating birthday news for Mick, and Danny takes drastic measures to get Bal and Cliff back together. Will Jerry be able to get himself out of a predicament in time (1) (5662)

Patrolling the roads (8.30pm)

- 8.30 An Inspector Calls A new six-part series begins with two river inspectors on the Norfolk broads during the August Bank Holiday week (1) (9657)

9.00 Countryside Undercover: Bringing Home the Bacon. The undercover cameras uncover the disgraceful practices routinely carried out at certain pig farms (1/6) (1) (8909)

9.30 Fortean TV Father Lionel Fanthorpe Investigates more cases of the paranormal (1) (17541)

10.00 ER Fast-moving, American hospital drama series. The spirit of goodwill is thin on the ground at Christmas in Chicago. Jeanne's HIV positive status heightens anxieties in the emergency room (1) (8638)

11.00 Friends Having received woeful advice earlier, a chastened Joey hits another career crisis when he is offered a role in a daytime soap if he sleeps with the casting director (1) (1) (3454)

11.30 Cheltenham Festival Highlights introduced by Lesley Graham (27015)

12.00 Under the Moon Sports magazine (259554)

2.30am NBA XFL Basketball action from America (54416)

4.00 Schools (1232400)

5.10 Terrytoons (784226)

5.35 Backstage with Valerie Singleton (1) (1) (8753139)

For more comprehensive listings of satellite and cable channels, see the Directory, published on Saturday

SKY 1

- 6.00am Morning Glory (14831) 6.00 Regal and Katie Lee (1988) 6.30 Another World (75164) 11.00 Days of Our Lives (89228) 12.00 Oprah Winfrey (78767) 1.00pm The Simpsons (89228) 1.30pm The Simpsons (89228) 1.50pm The Simpsons (89228) 2.00pm The Simpsons (89228) 2.30pm The Simpsons (89228) 3.00pm The Simpsons (89228) 3.30pm The Simpsons (89228) 4.00pm The Simpsons (89228) 4.30pm The Simpsons (89228) 5.00pm The Simpsons (89228) 5.30pm The Simpsons (89228) 6.00pm The Simpsons (89228) 6.30pm The Simpsons (89228) 7.00pm The Simpsons (89228) 7.30pm The Simpsons (89228) 8.00pm The Simpsons (89228) 8.30pm The Simpsons (89228) 9.00pm The Simpsons (89228) 9.30pm The Simpsons (89228) 10.00pm The Simpsons (89228) 10.30pm The Simpsons (89228) 11.00pm The Simpsons (89228) 11.30pm The Simpsons (89228) 12.00pm The Simpsons (89228)

SKY MOVIES GOLD

- 6.00pm Roman Holiday (1959) (375725) 6.30pm Roman Holiday from the Theatre (1959) (375727) 10.00pm Hard to Kill (1987) (1987) 11.00pm Baby Face (1959) (1959) (707218) 1.25am Touch of Evil (1958) (257439) 2.15am-5.10am Call Me (1960) (1960) (89739)

CARTOON NETWORK/TNT

- Continuous cartoons from 5pm to 9pm, then TNT films as follows:
6.00pm It's Always Fair Weather (1955) (5025608) 11.00pm Braveheart (1976) (7538184) 12.05am A Prince of Anarchy (1987) (4894874) 2.45am-5.00am It's Always Fair Weather (1955) (5025608)

THE DISNEY CHANNEL

- Sky Movies Gold takes over at 10pm:
6.00am Mouse Traps (4177877) 6.30am Mouse Traps (4177877) 6.50am Mouse Traps (4177877) 7.15am The Little Mermaid (1987) (747473) 7.40am Aladdin (1992) (816430) 8.10am Aladdin (1992) (816430) 8.40am Aladdin (1992) (816430) 9.10am Aladdin (1992) (816430) 9.40am Aladdin (1992) (816430) 10.10am Aladdin (1992) (816430) 10.40am Aladdin (1992) (816430) 11.10am Aladdin (1992) (816430) 11.40am Aladdin (1992) (816430) 12.10am Aladdin (1992) (816430) 12.40am Aladdin (1992) (816430) 1.10am Aladdin (1992) (816430) 1.40am Aladdin (1992) (816430) 2.10am Aladdin (1992) (816430) 2.40am Aladdin (1992) (816430) 3.10am Aladdin (1992) (816430) 3.40am Aladdin (1992) (816430) 4.10am Aladdin (1992) (816430) 4.40am Aladdin (1992) (816430) 5.10am Aladdin (1992) (816430) 5.40am Aladdin (1992) (816430) 6.10am Aladdin (1992) (816430) 6.40am Aladdin (1992) (816430) 7.10am Aladdin (1992) (816430) 7.40am Aladdin (1992) (816430) 8.10am Aladdin (1992) (816430) 8.40am Aladdin (1992) (816430) 9.10am Aladdin (1992) (816430) 9.40am Aladdin (1992) (816430) 10.10am Aladdin (1992) (816430) 10.40am Aladdin (1992) (816430) 11.10am Aladdin (1992) (816430) 11.40am Aladdin (1992) (816430) 12.10am Aladdin (1992) (816430) 12.40am Aladdin (1992) (816430) 1.10am Aladdin (1992) (816430) 1.40am Aladdin (1992) (816430) 2.10am Aladdin (1992) (816430) 2.40am Aladdin (1992) (816430) 3.10am Aladdin (1992) (816430) 3.40am Aladdin (1992) (816430) 4.10am Aladdin (1992) (816430) 4.40am Aladdin (1992) (816430) 5.10am Aladdin (1992) (816430) 5.40am Aladdin (1992) (816430) 6.10am Aladdin (1992) (816430) 6.40am Aladdin (1992) (816430) 7.10am Aladdin (1992) (816430) 7.40am Aladdin (1992) (816430) 8.10am Aladdin (1992) (816430) 8.40am Aladdin (1992) (816430) 9.10am Aladdin (1992) (816430) 9.40am Aladdin (1992) (816430) 10.10am Aladdin (1992) (816430) 10.40am Aladdin (1992) (816430) 11.10am Aladdin (1992) (816430) 11.40am Aladdin (1992) (816430) 12.10am Aladdin (1992) (816430) 12.40am Aladdin (1992) (816430) 1.10am Aladdin (1992) (816430) 1.40am Aladdin (1



RUGBY LEAGUE 45

Myler committed to keeping the game on right track

SPORT

WEDNESDAY MARCH 12 1997

SAILING 45

James Capstick finds the Southern Ocean an unforgiving place

Grayson expected to be fit

Healey takes up England's pole position

By DAVID HANDS, RUGBY CORRESPONDENT

AUSTIN HEALEY, the spark who has helped to set Leicester's season aflame, will win his first full England cap on Saturday when he plays scrum half against Wales on the final weekend of the five nations' championship in the match that will decide whether England can take at least a triple crown from a season of much promise.

Healey, 23 and capped as a replacement against Ireland last month, changes places with Andy Gomarsall, the Wasp who has struggled to sustain the bright start that he made to his international career against Italy in November. That he does so at such a late hour adds piquancy to an already rich occasion, since Healey has every prospect of joining Robert Howley, whom he will oppose, on the British Lions tour to South Africa in the summer.

Not only that, it is Howley whose technique Healey has studied this season on video in order to make himself a better all-round player. Bob Dwyer, the Leicester director of rugby, suggested that Howley's support play was worthy of dissection and on Saturday he will see how much the confident Healey has learnt.

Since the match is in Cardiff, Healey will also enjoy the opportunity to exorcise some ghosts. In January he played in the Leicester team put to the sword by Brive in the Heineken Cup final; he will seek to show a discerning public that he is a better player than he appeared that day.

Healey's elevation is the only change made to the XV beaten 23-20 by France, which, given the gloomy prognostications surrounding Paul Grayson earlier in the week, is surprising. The England medical team have given Grayson an optimistic report; he did only light stretching at



FIVE NATIONS CHAMPIONSHIP

Bisham Abbey yesterday and must indicate full fitness tomorrow, all being well, however, he will partner Healey, who has come from the back of the pack this season.

After he moved from Orrell to Leicester, various leading coaches suggested that Healey needed to develop his half-back skills if he was to move up the ladder, but nobody could criticise his outstanding pace, his cover defence and his utter self-confidence.

Where, he was asked, does his confidence come from? "My ability," he said simply, which will receive a severe examination against Howley.

He has moved from fourth in the pecking order to first after Matthew Dawson was overlooked — and later injured — by Kyran Bracken, who moved to England A and Gomarsall given a chance, only to be edged aside after five caps. "Healey has been pressing very hard and this is the game in which to give him

ENGLAND

TRG Simpson (Newcastle); M Sleigh (Bath); W D C Carling (Hartpury); P R de Glanville (Bath, captain); T Underwood (Newcastle); P J Garsion (Northampton); A Healey (Leicester); G C Rowntree (Leicester); M P Rogers (Bristol); J Leeson (Worcester); L B W Osullivan (Worcester); M O Johnson (Leicester); S D Shaw (Bristol); R A Hill (Saracens); T A K Roddie (Northampton); Replacement: J C Scahill (Bath); M J Cull (Bath); A C G Gomarsall (Worcester); B B Clarke (Richmond); D J Gifford (Leicester); P B T Greening (Gloucester)

his opportunity," Jack Rowell, the England coach, said.

Healey spent two seasons as a wing with Waterloo before moving to Orrell to replace Dewi Morris. "To come from the back was a surprise, but it gives you that little extra drive," he said. "Criticism of your game gives you something to work on, to become a better player, but, whenever I walk on to the pitch, I think as a rugby player, not just as a scrum half, rugby is about reading the game, about getting to the right place at the right time."

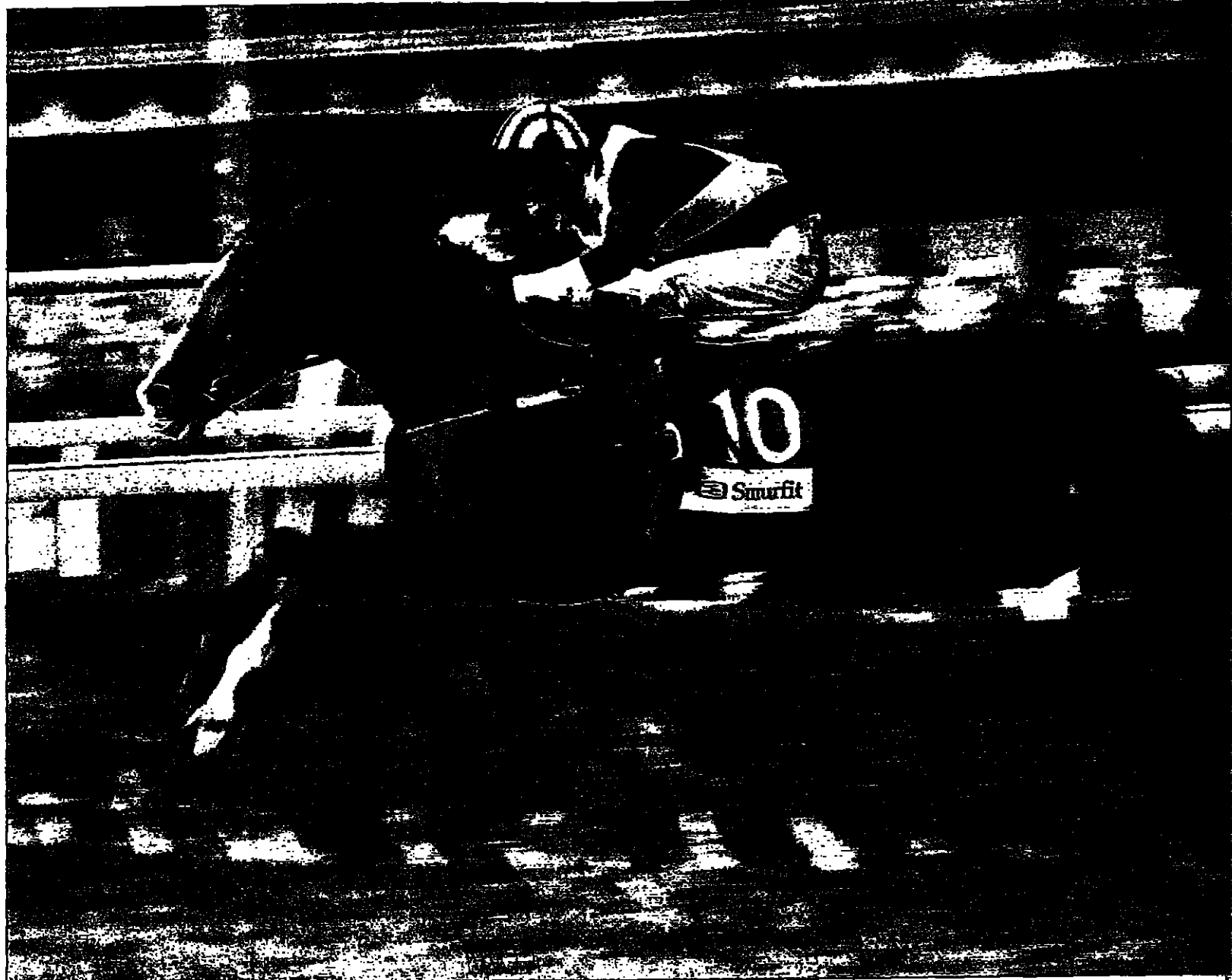
Healey is arriving at the right place at much the same time as Will Carling is likely to leave it. Rumours have abounded that this will be Carling's final England appearance, though he is closing no doors. "That is the way I am inclined at the moment, but I won't make any definite decision until I have thought long and hard about it during the summer," Carling said.

He fully intends to complete his two-year contract with Harlequins, but, at 31, has reached the stage where domestic and business interests demand more time, which international rugby does not allow. "I don't think my enthusiasm has diminished, but you get to the stage where there are other things to do," he said.

Wales look certain to give Jonathan Davies a final outing at stand-off when their team is named tomorrow. Neil Jenkins will remain at full back with Kingsley Jones, the Ebbw Vale flanker, standing by should Colin Charvis withdraw. Charvis (groin), Iwan Evans (calf and hamstring), Scott Gibbs (neck) and Scott Quinnell (leg) missed training yesterday, but David Young and Christian Loader, the props, were able to complete the session.

Alain Penaud, the Brive stand-off, has withdrawn from the France squad to play Scotland in Paris after collecting a groin injury against Narbonne at the weekend.

Irish plans, page 44



Make A Stand and McCoy storm over the last on their way to a memorable front-running triumph in the Champion Hurdle yesterday

Pipes fulfil their driving ambitions

By RICHARD EVANS, RACING CORRESPONDENT

MARTIN PIPE sent out the winners of the Smurfit Champion Hurdle and Guinness Arkle Trophy at Cheltenham yesterday but was left counting the cost — thanks to a rash promise by his wife, Carol, to their son.

The victory of Make A Stand, who made all the running, in the Champion Hurdle means he will now have to buy David Pipe, 24, a top-of-the-range Mitsubishi costing £45,000 — putting a severe dent in the prize-money won by the six-times champion trainer on the opening day of the Festival.

"I saw this fantastic car in the car park at Newbury racecourse before Make A Stand ran in the Tote Gold Trophy and my mother said I could have one if we won the race," David, assistant to his

father, explained. "I got the catalogue out after he won and it cost £45,000 so she said 'no', but promised me the car if Make A Stand won the Champion Hurdle."

Martin Pipe confirmed: "My wife said David could have the car... I think I have lost my trainer's share of the prize-money I've won today."

Pipe earned £17,637.25 for his training fee yesterday, and will be relieved that he still owns 50 per cent of the horse, for which he won a further £62,069. Despite a stunning day which began by sending out Nordic Breeze, a 100-1 shot, to finish third in the opening Citron Supreme Novices' Hurdle, and was crowned by the victories of Make A Stand and Or Royal in the Arkle, he ended the day with just a modest profit. However, that will be a little after one of the finest days of his remarkable career.

On an afternoon when Cheltenham deserved the "Glorious" epithet normally reserved for Goodwood, the thermometer soared towards the 70s, sunglasses were as necessary as binoculars and the sun-drenched ground started to bake dry. A course record

RACE RESULT

- 1 MAKE A STAND 7-1
- 2 Theatreworld 33-1
- 3 Space Truck 9-2

time in the opening race suggested the going was much faster than the official description of good, which was ideal for Make A Stand.

Nevertheless, as Tony McCoy and the 7-1 shot adopted their normal front-running role, few among the 41,224 crowd expected the combination to remain at the head of

affairs come the winning line. After all, Night Nurse was the last Champion Hurdle winner to make all the running in 1977.

Large Action, the 7-2 favourite, was pulled up after two hurdles having lost his action and a flight later Collier Bay made a serious error which effectively ended his chances of retaining the hurdling crown. By now McCoy had skipped ten lengths clear.

The champion jockey gave his mount a breather going towards the top of the hill, the furthest point from the stands, in preparation for the demands that lay ahead. The pack closed, only for McCoy to kick on down the hill and reopen a decisive lead. Suddenly, the improbable looked plausible as the jockeys behind McCoy raised their sticks in anger.

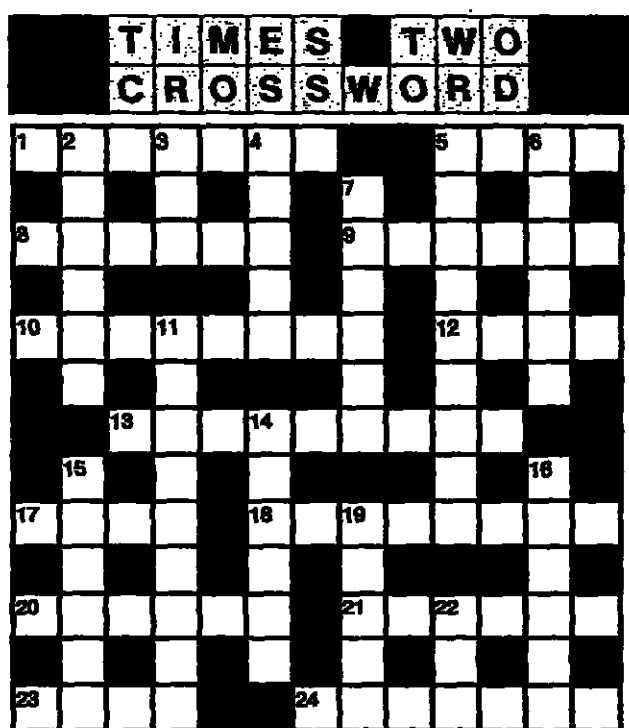
John Shortt, who led the chasing posse on Space Truck

er, said: "I could not believe he led us like that all the way through the Champion Hurdle. I got within three lengths of him at the last and then he went away again. My heart sank: I couldn't believe it. To do that to Champion Hurdle horses was incredible."

At the line, Make A Stand, a novice at the start of this season, had five lengths to spare over an Irish quartet led by Theatreworld and completed by Space Truck, Im Supposin and Hill Society. The race time was another course record.

"He's a tremendous horse and Mr Pipe has done a wonderful job with him," McCoy said. "He's gone from winning at Newton Abbot to winning the Champion Hurdle. If that is not improvement I don't know what is."

Smiling Pipe, page 42
Richard Dunwoody, page 43



No 1039

- ACROSS
- 1 Record, subdue (3,4)
 - 5 Members of scrum (4)
 - 8 Chief conspirator (J. Caesar) (6)
 - 9 Place of bliss (6)
 - 10 Aggressive masculinity (8)
 - 12 Sort of bun, chair, cube (4)
 - 13 Church elder (9)
 - 17 Cheap clearance (4)
 - 18 London station: crushing defeat (8)
 - 20 Forswear (6)
 - 21 Forearm-flexing muscle (6)
 - 23 Hacked out (4)
 - 24 Crusaders' Arab opponent (7)
- DOWN
- 2 Imaginary (6)
 - 3 Spect: Morse signal (3)
 - 4 Aristophanes play: insects (5)
 - 5 Improvise (4,2,3)
 - 6 Bring into existence (6)
 - 7 Selective (6)
 - 11 Lover of Columbine (9)
 - 14 Woodcutter: Twain hero (6)
 - 15 Chatter incoherently (6)
 - 16 Hairpiece (6)
 - 19 Small Indian drum-pair (5)
 - 22 US spy bureau (1,1,1)

SOLUTION TO NO 1038
ACROSS: 1 Evergreens 8 Elegiac 9 Run up 10 Thin 11 Sephardi 13 Dogma 14 Run in 16 Moriarty 17 Pipe 20 Nasal 21 Pompeii 22 Bluebottle
DOWN: 1 Event 2 Evening dress 3 Grit 4 Eccles 5 Northern 6 Intransigent 7 Option 12 Parallel 13 Demand 15 Steppe 18 Edie 19 Ammo

SOLUTION TO TIMES TWO CROSSWORD 1034
In association with BRITISH MIDLAND
ACROSS: 1 Dupe 3 Flashman 8 Mollie 10 Relic 11 Sixth former 13 India 15 Atanin 17 Householder 20 Herod 21 Suspended 22 Progress 23 Slur
DOWN: 1 Domestic 2 Fluxus 4 Lie low 5 Scrumptious 6 Malaria 7 Neck 9 Echo sounder 12 Intruder 14 Scherzo
1st PRIZE of a return ticket travelling economy class to anywhere on BRITISH MIDLAND's domestic or international network is R. Bickerton, Cumnor, Oxford.
2nd PRIZE of a return ticket to anywhere on BRITISH MIDLAND's domestic network is J. Soper, London NL.
All flights subject to availability.

Players asked to forgive publicly

By OUR SPORTS STAFF

GRAHAM KELLY, the chief executive of the Football Association, has written to Peter Schmeichel and Ian Wright urging them to end their feud publicly. The publication of the letter from Kelly came on the day when Schmeichel, the Manchester United goalkeeper, learnt that he would not face a criminal charge for alleged racist remarks to Wright, the Arsenal forward, at Old Trafford in November. Kelly strongly implies that if Wright and Schmeichel agree to meet they will also avoid disciplinary action from the FA.

In his letter to Schmeichel, which is identical to the one sent to Wright, Kelly writes: "I have to decide what is best for English football. I have to be aware that both you and Ian Wright are public figures, idolised by millions of football fans at home and abroad. Your example is vitally important."

That is why I ask you, in the interests of the game as a whole, to make a public statement of reconciliation with Ian Wright as soon as possible. In doing so, you can be a power for bringing the game together, not dividing it. I believe I understand your strong feelings about what has happened. But English football is bigger and more important than both of you, and me."

The two players had to be separated at the end of United's 2-1 win at Highbury last month following a challenge by the Arsenal player on Schmeichel.

Wright said yesterday that he was happy to go along with the FA's desire for reconciliation and, despite being asked



Schmeichel: no charge

Gordon Taylor, the chief executive of the Professional Footballers' Association, gave his full backing to Kelly's letter. "While we are pleased Peter has not been charged by the CPS, it is important this issue is resolved by the players," he said.

"I believe Ian will respond to the FA's initiative and I hope Peter will as well. Both are respected professionals, both are volatile characters, but both must be big enough to make up for the good of the game."

Liverpool call on £3m Citko

By DAVID MADDOCK

PERHAPS in recognition of the continuing frailties that have, at times, undermined their season, Liverpool have entered into preliminary negotiations to buy Marek Citko, the Poland international forward.

The events of Monday night, when the Merseysiders squandered a three-goal lead against Newcastle United only to conjure up a late, late winning goal, suggest it is defence, not attack, that requires immediate attention, but Roy Evans, the Liverpool manager, has clearly exhausted a saint-like patience with Stan Collymore, his miscreant forward, and has now settled into the task of finding an adequate replacement. It seems Citko, at 23, fits the bill.

Liverpool have been offered Citko at a reasonable £3 million by his Polish club, Widzew Lodz, and Evans believes such a figure represents value in today's inflated transfer market. The forward is a proven scorer at the highest level, as a goal against England in the World Cup qualifying match last year at Wembley and more recent exploits in the European Cup Champions' League testify.

Citko had tentatively agreed a move to Blackburn Rovers earlier in the season, after a £2.5 million fee had been agreed, but after a wrangle over a suddenly inflated fee that apparently reached a new level of £4 million, Citko developed a keen, if surprising, interest in the priesthood and indicated he would rather remain in Poland to pursue his new-found calling. Nevertheless, his club appears eager

to sell a highly-valued asset to raise much-needed capital and Citko, for his part, has expressed an ambition to join Liverpool.

Evans entered into tentative talks with representatives of the player and Widzew last week and negotiations can begin in earnest now Liverpool have safely, if eccentrically, negotiated the tricky hurdle presented by Newcastle on Monday evening. Evans could ask to take the player on trial, just as Blackburn did earlier

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BILLY STAYS put 44

in the season, when Tony Parkes, the caretaker manager at Ewood Park, judged Citko to be a goalscorer of impressive potential.

If Evans does take the plunge before the transfer deadline on March 27 and the Pole receives a work permit in time to allow the deal to be finalised, then it will raise further questions about the future of Collymore. He was again notable by his absence from the Liverpool team on Monday evening after being dropped the previous week.

Aston Villa have once again expressed an interest in signing the player after receiving no encouragement from Everton in response to inquiries about the availability of their Scotland striker, Duncan Ferguson. Citko's arrival could hasten a cut-price departure to Collymore's native Midlands, where the player still lives, despite the inconvenience of a daily four-hour round trip to Liverpool.

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